THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVAḌ-GĪṬĀ

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Adyar, Madras, India

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

BY

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Four Lectures delivered at the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, held at Adyar, on December 27, 28, 29 *and* 30, 1886

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T. SUBBA ROW

AN APPRECIATION

My acquaintance with T. Subba Row began at the end of 1884, when I came here to Madras and settled down with the intention of practising in the High Court. It was at the Theosophical Convention of 1884 that I first met him, and from the very first moment became so deeply attracted to him as to make it difficult for me to understand why it was so. My admiration of his ability was so great that I began to look upon him almost from that time as a great man. He was a very well-made robust man, and strikingly intellectual. When H. P. B. was here, he was known to be a great favourite of hers. It was said that he first attracted her attention by a paper called "The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac", which was afterwards published. At the Convention, there was much talk on various topics, and he always spoke with decision, and his views carried great weight. But he spoke little and only what was necessary. There was then a small committee of which Colonel Olcott was the President. Subba Row was one of the members of this, and R. Raghunatha Row, P. Srinivasa Row and

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myself were also among its members. This committee used to meet on Sundays, but there was very little business to be done.

Very shortly after my coming to Madras, one day I was taken to a room, which is now the office of Mr. Schwarz, to see the pictures of two Masters. The big hall had not been built. H. P. B. and Subba Row were the only persons present, and I do not remember, after such a long lapse of time, what actually took place. I understood that I was admitted into the Second Section of the T.S. which had then been founded. The only thing that I knew of in connection with it subsequently was the circulation of new manuscript papers bearing on the question of Rounds, etc. Dr. Franz Hartmann, who was also a member of the Society, stayed at the Headquarters and began to give trouble, and I believe that owing to those troubles and to the departure of H. P. B., the Second Section practically ceased to exist, so far as India was concerned. But upon this point I am not quite sure.

As practitioners in the same Court, Subba Row and myself used to meet daily in the Court House. I was, therefore, a very close acquaintance of his, and he reciprocated my friendship to an extent which was to me a matter of deep gratitude. He used to drive in the evenings on holidays, and when there was no occasion to go to the Headquarters. He talked about various things to me, but never

about occult matters. He was so reticent on this question, that for the whole period he survived, some six years after I became acquainted with him, he never once mentioned to me the Masters or the two Masters connected with our Society. I think he even avoided answering questions regarding their existence. So far as I know, the only persons he would speak to about Occultism were Mr. C. W. Leadbeater and Mr. A. J. Cooper-Oakley, who were both very great friends of his. Cooper-Oakley was a sort of chela to him. Though he would not say anything about the Masters, it was believed that he was a disciple of Master M. Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Row, who was much his senior, and a much respected man, used to call Subba Row jocularly "Master".

In December 1886, his discourses on the *Gīṭā* were delivered on four mornings of the Convention of that year. There was much difficulty in persuading him to deliver the lectures. I was one of the three or four who put pressure upon him to deliver the lectures. A part of the condition of his undertaking to do so was that I should attend the session of the Indian National Congress, which was to take place in Calcutta that year. He persuaded me to go there, and I said I would do so, if he promised to deliver the discourses on the *Gīṭā*. As I expected that the lectures would be most valuable, and as I could not be present, I arranged with a shorthand

reporter to take notes of those lectures, and I paid him, if I remember correctly, Rs. 150. It was from these notes that the lectures were first published in *The Theosophist.*

Everybody admired his great capacity and power of expression, not to speak of the depth of learning displayed by him in the course of these lectures. One gentleman, by name Bhashikachariar, who was a Sanskrit Pandit of great ability, and who, I think, presented a large number of books to the Adyar Library, was lost in admiration at the end of these lectures. I believe, on the last day, he went and embraced Subba Row in token of his admiration, and actually asked him how he managed to gather so much learning about such a difficult subject. After the appearance of the lectures in *The Theosophist*, it occurred to me that their publication in book form would be useful, and unless my memory fails, the first edition was published at my request by Tookaram Tatya of Bombay, an enthusiastic Theosophist, and I contributed towards the expenses of the publication. I remember forwarding copies of this reprint in book form to Professor Max Müller. But the Professor did not think it worth while to acknowledge even the receipt of the .pamphlet. In all probability the fact that it came from a Theosophist was the reason of this.

I think the lectures, as they stand now, are as he actually spoke them on the four mornings. The

shorthand report, when submitted to him, required very little revision. I was informed that each morning he came with a small slip of paper containing some very few notes, and it was with the aid of these notes that the whole discourse was given without hesitation or interruption. A second edition of these discourses was intended to be issued many years afterwards, and, I believe, that Tookaram Tatya's son claimed the copyright and objected to the Society issuing a second edition. Mr. B. P. Wadia consulted me, and I then showed him that the claimant had no right, but I do not know whether a second edition was issued by the Society or not.[1]

Subba Row's observations on the sevenfold classification, and his preference for the fourfold classification touched upon in the first lecture, led to a controversy on the subject, and to H. P. B.'s replies on the matter. It was said that Subba Row's criticism on the subject gave offence to H. P. B., who was then absent in Europe. Partly due to this controversy, Subba Row's visits to the Headquarters became less frequent. About the same time a certain American Theosophist made an attack on him, either in private letters or in the columns of the *Path*, charging him with Brahman narrowness in not freely communicating to European Theosophists knowledge and information he had about the Masters and kindred subjects. One afternoon, after he had played

[1] T.P.H., 1912.

tennis and was sitting discussing with Dr. Cook, another Theosophist, who was a great friend of his, Subba Row expressed his intention of resigning his membership in the T.S., and he actually did so a few days later. I forgot to say he was an able tennis player, and he almost invariably drove straight from the High Court to the Cosmopolitan Club and played on the tennis ground there. He was almost the best Indian player and quite equal to Dr. Cook, an expert in the game.

After his resignation of membership in the T. S., Subba Row, after tennis, used to go Dr. Cook's house, which was adjacent to the Club. Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley used to join them there, and there were talks in which Subba Row was the chief speaker. I was the only Indian present, and I considered it a privilege to be at those talks. Mr. Oakley made short notes, after the conversation was over, and he was good enough to let me have a copy of them, which I still have. A great many interesting things said on those occasions, of course, find no place in the notes, which, nevertheless, show his great knowledge about religious and occult subjects.

He occasionally made statements, which were enigmatical, and among them one which took many years for me to understand. This statement was that: "There are three Shankaras to seven Buddhas." As I knew so little about Races, Buddhas and Manus,

I did not understand what this statement meant, then; but I have since come to the conclusion that, when he spoke of the three Shankaras he was referring to the three Kumāras, who are the Disciples of the Lord.

Though he showed great friendship to me, as I have already stated, he never thought of giving me any help in spiritual matters. There was then no one at Adyar occupying the position of H. P. B. or A. B., and one got no assistance from the Colonel about meditation and the like. I used to press Subba Row to give me some directions. But he would not do so, until a year before his death. I think it was in March, 1888, in this very hall, where I am dictating this, that I spoke to him very strongly about his refusal to help even true aspirants; and this respectful rebuke drew forth from him the remark: "What can I do for you, when you have not been performing even your Sanḍhyā properly? However, begin now with repeating Gāyaṭrī during the morning twilight, and perform your Sanḍhyā properly." I followed his advice, repeating the Manṭra one thousand and eight times every morning, for many years. Two months before his illness which ended in his death, as we had finished playing tennis and were sitting down, he put me a question: "Had you a dream last night?" My reply was: "I remember no dream." I asked him why he put the question to me. He replied: "I saw something about you, and it

appeared to me that you have a better soul than I thought." Then I asked him how it was that he had the dream or the vision, and not I. He said: "Probably because I put you on the way," referring to his prescribing the Gāyatrī Discipline, and he added: "You have just begun to scratch the power." I then asked him to give me some further directions. He said: "We will see next year." To my great misfortune, I never saw him after this. I went away for the hot weather vacation, and he was shortly after taken ill in Madras and died. During his illness, he was treated by a European member of the medical profession, who was considered the ablest medical man then in the city. Dr. Rangappa, who was an Indian doctor, and who also treated him, told me that Subba Row's illness was "pemphigus", brought about by intense thinking.

I remember Subba Row himself telling me that after he took his B.A. degree, which he did with great distinction, being in the first class, and first in the Presidency, his mind had turned to spiritual matters, and for some nine years he never could sleep, and he used to rack his brain night and day over spiritual subjects. He also tried some Hatha Yoga practices. He said that relief came to him one day when an "old man" appeared to him—astrally I take it—and told him: "Do not go that way, but this way." Those were the words, and from that moment he knew what was wanted in his

case. This old man he spoke of was a dark Dravidian, who had been working in this country for fifty years. Of course, Subba Row gave no further explanation. Possibly, it may have been the great Adept known to Indians as Ḍaṭṭāṭreya, who enjoys a veneration unequalled even to-day. He referred to Ḍaṭṭāṭreya, on one occasion, as Ṭrimūrṭi-Âṭmakam, which meant, I take it: "In Him the Power of three Logoi has found expression." In the note to one of the articles in *The Theosophist* signed, T S.R., he refers to this Ḍaṭṭāṭreya, as the type of one of the three classes of Adepts. The representatives of the other two are Ḍūrvāsas and Chanḍra. On the top of Baba Budan Hills in Mysore, there is a Shrine of Ḍaṭṭāṭreya and of his mother, Anasūyā, which attracts pilgrims from Mahārāṣhtra, every year. "This Ḍaṭṭāṭreya," Subba Row said, "was the Maharṣhi who helped an Emperor of his time, Karṭikeya by name, to carry on his great government." On one occasion Subba Row said that a Muhammadan priest who looked after a Muhammadan tomb on the Hills succeeded in invoking Ḍaṭṭāṭreya, and when the Maharṣhi appeared, the fool of a Muhammadan prayed for a boon in the shape of a lace turban, instead of liberation, which the Ṛṣhi might have managed to secure for him. It seems that this Maharṣhi appears in the shape of a big tree to those who invoke him. Anasūyā, his mother, is one of the great Indian female Adepts. She was

the paṭnī or wife of Ṛshi Aṭri, and Daṭṭāṭreya means the son of Atri. Subba Row himself on one occasion spoke of the necessity of founding an occult organisation with Daṭṭāṭreya as its head, in order to train Indian Sannyāsis for Theosophical purposes.

After his death, I thought it was my duty to collect his few contributions to Theosophical literature—inadequate, indeed, to represent his learning—and the result was the publication of the volume entitled *The Esoteric Writings of T. Subba Row.* It was issued by Tookaram Tatya, to whom I paid Rs. 500 in connection with the publication. This was the result of a very careful search by myself in the volumes of *The Theosophist* up to the time of Subba Row's death. After all, it is a very, very meagre contribution by him of the learning he had on certain subjects, having regard to his wide knowledge and great erudition.

His admiration and reverence for the teachings contained in the Hinḍū sacred writings connected with Vedānta and Raja Yoga were as unbounded as his knowledge of them was accurate. He once observed that a most profound treatise on the Sacred Science could be written based altogether on the Prasṭhāna Ṭraya, or the Three Bundles of nourishment provided for those who wish to tread the "razor path", namely the *Upanishaṭs*, the *Brahma Sūṭras*, and the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā.* That he himself could have written the book, those who knew him will not doubt. But I felt certain that he would not

render that service, for the simple reason of his extreme disinclination to put pen to paper and write on such a subject. As a proof of this disinclination, I may refer to what Bhavani Shankar told me in relation to Subba Row's paper on the *Idyll of the White Lotus.* Bhavani was a great friend of Subba Row, and used to be sent by H. P. B. to Subba Row to get him to write articles for *The Theosophist.*

Bhavani got Subba Row to promise to write a review of the *Idyll,* copies of which had just then come to this country. Bhavani paid a number of visits to Subba Row to obtain this promised review. But every time he was put off with some excuse or other and was told to come later on. On the occasion of his visit, the last but one in connection with this matter, Subba Row attempted to send him away without the paper, as he had done often before. But Bhavani told him that he was determined to sit in the house and that he would not leave, until he got what had been promised. Subba Row was incapable of being unkind or rude to anyone, and so got pen and paper and wrote the first part of it straight away, without a scratch or a correction from beginning to end. The second part was written on a subsequent day.

His memory was most remarkable, and he could repeat passages from some of the sacred books, as if he had committed them to memory, though he had but read them once or twice. Of course, his study of them

was critical, and his quotations in conversation from them were apt and forcible. For example, one afternoon, after tennis was over, some question arose about the nature of Ātman. Subba Row cited at once the passage in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣhaṭ* explaining what Ātman was. This Upaniṣhaṭ was a favourite authority with him, and the four-fold division which he laid stress upon in his *Gīṭā* lectures was the one explained in this Upaniṣhaṭ. He spoke very highly of Gaudapāḍa's Kārikā on this Upaniṣhaṭ, and he thought there was but one other writer who could at all come up to the standard of Gaudapāḍa, and that was Plato. In the course of a casual conversation in which some point arose connected with Buddhist philosophy, Subba Row referred to this verse in this Kārikā where the term Āḍi Buḍḍha occurs. It was Subba Row's high opinion of this Kārikā that led me to employ Mani Lal Dvivedi to publish an English translation of the Kārikā with Shankara's Commentary.

Subba Row's acquaintance with Manṭra Shāsṭra, theoretical and practical, was apparently profound. It was he who taught Bhavani the Gopala Manṭram. Others had also obtained from him instructions regarding the use of some great Manṭras. One or two instances showed he knew how to invoke elementals, in order to produce phenomena.

I forgot to mention that Subba Row's death was most untimely. He was, I think, only about

thirty-three, when he passed away. He had hoped to live very much longer. I heard him say once that after making a little money, he intended to retire to the part of the country where he came from and go on "making Ṭapas," till his eightieth year. He asked me once to obtain a reading of his horoscope from an astrologer in Pondicherry, and that astrologer foretold that Subba Row would not live longer than he actually did.

His school career was quite a brilliant one. He began his English education in Coconada, and exercised great power over his school mates. Subba Row was removed by his parents to Madras, where he joined the Presidency College, and as I have already stated, took his B. A. degree, ranking first in the presidency. That Subba Row was a precocious boy, may be judged from the fact that he took his very high place in his B. A. examination, when he was, probably, under twenty, and his B.L. within a year or two afterwards. About 1885, when he was already practising in the High Court, as a Vakil, the Provincial Civil Service competitive examination was first established. Subba Row was one of the candidates, who appeared for that exmination in that year. He scored the highest number of marks and was placed first in the list of successful candidates. The time allowed for the preparation of the subjects by the candidates was comparatively short. Though practising in the High Court all the time, he got up his subjects, through intense application and study. Geology was

one of the subjects which he took. Though altogether new to him, he prepared the subject, it is said, in a few weeks, studying the geological specimens, which were in the Government Museum at Egmore, spending there many hours. Mr. Michie Smith, Professor of Physical Science in the Christian College, afterwards in charge of the Kodaikanal Observatory, was so struck with the thoroughness of Subba Row's knowledge of the subject, as he found it during the *viva voce* examination, that he let him off with very few questions. Unfortunately for Subba Row, the office which ought to have been given to him was given to Varada Row, who took a lower place in the examination. This was a piece of injustice, of which Sir M. E. Grantduff's Government was guilty, and it was committed as a matter of favouritism to Varada Row's father, T. Rama Row, who was then a member of the Legislative Council and a friend of the Governor.

Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row thought so highly of Subba Row that he invited him to take service under the Gaekwar. Subba Row did so, but returned to Madras, passed the B.L. examination, and was admitted a Vakil of the High Court. Needless to say, his reputation at the Bar grew, and had he been spared long enough, he would have risen to the Bench, and discharged the functions of his high office in a way that would have brought credit to the acknowledged judicial capacity of Indians.

It was when he was employed in Baroda that his mind turned towards spirituality and occultism. For some nine years he pondered over these and sowed the seeds of that nervous prostration which led to the terrible disaster that brought on his death two months after his illness began. It is certain he knew the Master "Jupiter" intimately. C. W. L. once said that on the occasion of the visit he paid to that Master, Subba Row accompanied him.

Subba Row was not fond of company except that of a few well known to him. On Sundays and holidays, he used to come to the T.S. Headquarters, where he spent his time in conversation with C. W. L., Cooper-Oakley, and others. He often went to the Government Oriental Library and spent hours in pouring over cadjan Sanskrit manuscripts.

S. Subramaniem

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

FIRST LECTURE

BEFORE proceeding with the subject, I think it necessary to make a few preliminary remarks. All of you know that our Society is established upon a cosmopolitan basis. We are not wedded to any particular creed or to any particular system or religious philosophy. We consider ourselves as mere enquirers. Every great system of philosophy is brought before us for the purpose of investigation. At the present time we are not at all agreed upon any particular philosophy which could be preached as the philosophy of our Society. This is no doubt a very safe position to take at the commencement. But from all this it does not follow that we are to be enquirers and enquirers only. We shall, no doubt, be able to find out the fundamental principles of all philosophy and base upon them a system which is likely to satisfy our wants and aspirations. You will kindly bear this in mind, and not take my views as the views of the Society, or as the views of any other authority higher than myself.

I shall simply put them forward for what they are worth. They are the results of my own investigations into various systems of philosophy and no higher authority is alleged for them. It is only with this view that I mean to put forward the few remarks I have to make.

You will remember that I gave an introductory lecture the last time we met here, and pointed out to you the fundamental notions which ought to be borne in mind in trying to understand the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā. I need not recapitulate all that I then said; it will be simply necessary to remind you that Kṛshṇa was intended to represent the Logos, which I shall hereafter explain at length; and that Arjuna, who was called Nara, was intended to represent the human monad.

The Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā, as it at present stands, is essentially practical in its character and teachings, like the discourses of all religious teachers who have appeared on the scene of the world to give a few practical directions to mankind for their spiritual guidance. Just as the sayings of Christ, the discourses of Buḍḍha, and the preachings of various other philosophers which have come down to us, are essentially didactic in character and practical in their tone, so is the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā. But these teachings will not be understood—indeed, in course of time they are even likely to be misunderstood—unless their basis is constantly kept in view. The Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā

starts from certain premises, which are not explained at length—they are simply alluded to here and there, and quoted for the purpose of enforcing the doctrine, or as authorities, and Kṛshṇa does not go into the details of the philosophy which is their foundation. Still there is a philosophical basis beneath his teachings, and unless that basis is carefully surveyed, we cannot understand the practical applications of the teachings of the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā, or even test them in the only way in which they can be tested.

Before proceeding further, I find it absolutely necessary to preface my discourse with an introductory lecture, giving the outlines of this system of philosophy which I have said is the basis of the practical teaching of Kṛshṇa. This philosophy I cannot gather or deduce from the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā itself; but I can show that the premises with which it starts are therein indicated with sufficient clearness.

This is a very vast subject, a considerable part of which I cannot at all touch; but I shall lay down a few fundamental principles which are more or less to be considered as axiomatic in their character—you may call them postulates for the time being—so many as are absolutely necessary for the purpose of understanding the philosophy of the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā. I shall not attempt to prove every philosophical principle I am about to lay down in the same manner in which a modern scientist attempts to prove all the laws he has gathered from an examination of nature.

In the case of a good many of these principles, inductive reasoning and experiment are out of the question; it will be next to impossible to test them in the ordinary course of life or in the ways available to the generality of mankind. But, nevertheless, these principles do rest upon very high authority. When carefully explained, they will be found to be the basis of every system of philosophy which human intellect has ever constructed, and furthermore, will also be found—I venture to promise—to be perfectly consistent with all that has been found out by man in the field of science; at any rate they give us a working hypothesis—a hypothesis which we may safely adopt at the commencement of our labours—for the time being. This hypothesis may be altered if you are quite certain that any new facts necessitate its alteration, but at any rate it is a working hypothesis which seems to explain all the facts which it is necessary for us to understand before we proceed upon a study of the gigantic and complicated machinery of nature.

Now to proceed with this hypothesis. First of all, I have to point out to you that any system of practical instruction for spiritual guidance will have to be judged, first, with reference to the nature and condition of man and the capabilities that are locked up in him; secondly, with reference to the cosmos and the forces to which man is subject and the circumstances under which he has to progress.

Unless these two points are sufficiently investigated, it will be hardly possible for us to ascertain the highest goal that man is capable of reaching; and unless there is a definite aim or a goal to reach, or an ideal towards which man has to progress, it will be almost impossible to say whether any particular instruction is likely to conduce to the welfare of mankind or not. Now I say these instructions can only be understood by examining the nature of the cosmos, the nature of man, and the goal towards which all evolutionary progress is tending.

Before I proceed further, let me tell you that I do not mean to adopt the sevenfold classification of the principles in man that has up to this time been adopted [1] in Theosophical writings generally. Just as I would classify the principles in man, I would classify the principles in the solar system and in the cosmos. There is a certain amount of similarity and the law of correspondence—as it is called by some writers, whatever may be the reason—is the law which obtains in a good many of the phenomena of nature, and very often by knowing what happens in the case of the microcosm we are enabled to infer what takes place in that of the macrocosm. Now as regards the numbers of principles and their relation between themselves, this sevenfold classification, which I do not

[1] This statement raised a controversy between the lecturer and Madame H. P. Blavatsky, for which the reader is referred to the *A Collection of Esoteric Writings of the late Mr. T. Subba Rao*, published by us.

mean to adopt, seems to me to be a very unscientific and misleading one. No doubt the number seven seems to play an important part in the cosmos, though it is neither a power nor a spiritual force; but it by no means necessarily follows that in every case we must adopt that number. What an amount of confusion has this sevenfold classification given rise to! These seven principles, as generally enumerated, do not correspond to any natural lines of cleavage, so to speak, in the constitution of man. Taking the seven principles in the order in which they are generally given, the physical body is separated from the so-called life-principle; the latter from what is called *Liṅga sharīra* (very often confounded with *Sūkṣhma sharīra*). Thus the physical body is divided into three principles. Now here we may make any number of divisions; if you please, you may as well enumerate nerve-force, blood, and bones, as so many distinct parts, and make the number of divisions as large as sixteen or thirty-five. But still the physical body does not constitute a separate entity apart from the life principle, nor the life principle apart from the physical body, and so with the *Liṅga sharīra.* Again, the so-called "astral body," the fourth principle, when separated from the fifth, soon disintegrates, and the so-called fourth principle is almost lifeless unless combined with the fifth. This system of division does not give us any distinct principles which have something like independent existence. And what is more,

this sevenfold classification is almost conspicuous by its absence in many of our Hindū books. At any rate a considerable portion of it is almost unintelligible to Hindū minds; and so it is better to adopt the time-honoured classification of four principles, for the simple reason that it divides man into so many entities as are capable of having separate existences, and that these four principles are associated with four *upādhis*[1] which are further associated in their turn with four distinct states of consciousness. And so, for all practical purposes—for the purpose of explaining the doctrines of religious philosophy—I have found it far more convenient to adhere to the fourfold classification than to adopt the septenary one and multiply principles in a manner more likely to introduce confusion than to throw light upon the subject. I shall therefore adopt the fourfold classification, and when I adopt it in the case of man, I shall also adopt it in the case of the solar system, and also in the case of the principles that are to be found in the cosmos. By cosmos I mean not the solar system only, but the whole of the cosmos.

In enumerating these principles I shall proceed in the order of evolution, which seems to be the most convenient one.

[1] Four Upādhis including the Ego—the reflected image of the Logos in Kāraṇa Sharīra—as the vehicle of the Light of the Logos. This is sometimes called Sāmānya Sharīra in Hindū Books. But strictly speaking, there are only three Upādhis.

I shall point out what position each of these principles occupies in the evolution of nature, and in passing from the First Cause to the organised human being of the present day, I shall give you the basis of the fourfold classification that I have promised to adopt.

The first principle, or rather the first postulate, which I have to lay down is the existence of what is called *Parabrahmam.* Of course there is hardly a system of philosophy which has ever denied the existence of the First Cause. Even the so-called atheists have never denied it. Various creeds have adopted various theories as to the nature of this First Cause. All sectarian disputes and differences have arisen, not from a difference of opinion as to the existence of the First Cause, but from the difference of the attributes that man's intellect has constantly tried to impose upon it. Is it possible to know anything of the First Cause? No doubt it is possible to know something about it. It is possible to know all about its manifestations, though it is next to impossible for human knowledge to penetrate into its inmost essence and say what it really is in itself. All religious philosophers are agreed that this First Cause is omnipresent and eternal. Further, it is subject to periods of activity and passivity. When *cosmic pralaya* comes, it is inactive, and when evolution commences, it becomes active.

But even the real reason for this activity and passivity is unintelligible to our minds. It is not matter

or anything like matter. It is not even consciousness, because all that we know of consciousness is with reference to a definite organism. What consciousness is or will be when entirely separated from *upāḍhi* is a thing utterly inconceivable to us, not only to us but to any other intelligence which has the notion of self or ego in it, or which has a distinct individualised existence. Again it is not even *āṭmā*. The word *āṭmā* is used in various senses in our books. It is constantly associated with the idea of Self. But *Parabrahmam* is not so associated ; so it is not ego, it is not non-ego, nor is it consciousness—or to use a phraseology adopted by our old philosophers, it is not *jñāṭa,* not *jñānam* and *jñeyam.* Of course every entity in this cosmos must come under one or the other of these three headings. But *Parabrahmam* does not come under any one of them. Nevertheless, it seems to be the one source of which *jñāṭa, jñānam,* and *jñeyam* are the manifestations or modes of existence. There are a few other aspects which it is necessary for me to bring to your notice, because those aspects are noticed in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā.

In the case of every objective consciousness, we know that what we call matter or non-ego is, after all, a mere bundle of attributes. But whether we arrive at our conclusion by logical inference, or whether we derive it from innate consciousness, we always suppose that there is an entity—the real essence of the thing upon which all these attributes

are placed—which bears these attributes, as it were, the essence itself being unknown to us.

All Vedānṭic writers of old have formulated the principle that *Parabrahmam* is the one essence of everything in the cosmos. When our old writers said "*Sarvam khalviḍambrahma,*" they did not mean that all those attributes which we associate with the idea of non-ego should be considered as Brahmam, nor did they mean that Brahmam should be looked upon as the *upāḍāna kāranam* in the same way that earth and water are the *upāḍāna kāranam* of this pillar. They simply meant that the real thing in the bundle of attributes that our consciousness takes note of, the essence which seems to be the bottom and the foundation of all phenomena is *Parabrahmam,* which, though not itself an object of knowledge, is yet capable of supporting and giving rise to every kind of object and every kind of existence which becomes an object of knowledge.

Now this *Parabrahmam,* which exists before all things in the cosmos, is the one essence from which starts into existence a centre of energy, which I shall for the present call the *Logos.*

This *Logos* may be called in the language of old writers either *Īshvara* or *Praṭyagāṭman* or *Shabḍa Brahmam.* It is called the *Verbum* or the Word by the Christians, and it is the divine *Christos* who is eternally in the bosom of his father. It is called *Avalokiteswara* by the Buḍḍhists; at any rate,

Avalokiteswara in one sense is the *Logos* in general, though no doubt in the Chinese doctrine there are also other ideas with which it is associated. In almost every doctrine they have formulated the existence of a centre of spiritual energy which is unborn and eternal, and which exists in a latent condition in the bosom of *Parabrahmam* at the time of *pralaya*, and starts as a centre of conscious energy at the time of cosmic activity. It is the first *jñāṭa* or the ego in the cosmos, and every other ego and every other self, as I shall hereafter point out, is but its reflection or manifestation. In its inmost nature it is not *unknowable* as *Parabrahmam*, but it is an object of the highest knowledge that man is capable of acquiring. It is the one great mystery in the cosmos, with reference to which all the initiations and all the systems of philosophy have been devised. What it really is in its inmost nature will not be a subject for consideration in my lecture, but there are some standpoints from which we have to look at it to understand the teachings in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā.

The few propositions that I am going to lay down with reference to this principle are these. It is not material or physical in its constitution, and it is not objective; it is not different in substance, as it were, or in essence, from *Parabrahmam*, and yet at the same time it is different from it in having an individualised existence. It exists in a latent condition in the bosom of *Parabrahmam*, at the time of *pralaya*,

just, for instance, as the sense of ego is latent at the time of *sushupṭi* or sleep. It is often described in our books as *sachchiḍānanḍam*, and by this epithet you must understand that it is *saṭ*, and that it is *chiṭ* and *ānanḍam*.

It has consciousness and an individuality of its own. I may as well say that it is the only *personal* God, perhaps, that exists in the cosmos. But, not to cause any misunderstanding, I must also state such centres of energy are almost innumerable in the bosom of *Parabrahmam*. It must not be supposed that this *Logos* is but a single centre of energy which is manifested by *Parabrahmam*. There are innumerable others. Their number is almost infinite. Perhaps even in this centre of energy called the *Logos* there may be differences; that is to say, *Parabrahmam* can manifest itself as a *Logos* not only in one particular, definite, form, but in various forms. At any rate, whatever may be the variations of form that may exist, it is unnecessary to go minutely into that subject for the purpose of understanding the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā. The *Logos* is here considered the *Logos* in the abstract, and not as any particular *Logos*, in giving all those instructions to Arjuna which are of a general application. The other aspects of the *Logos* will be better understood if I point out to you the nature of the other principles that start into existence subsequent to the existence of this *Logos* or *Verbum*.

Of course, this is the first manifestation of *Parabrahmam*, the first ego that appears in the cosmos, the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution. It is the one source of all energy in the cosmos, and the basis of all branches of knowledge; and, what is more, it is as it were the tree of life, because the *chaiṭanyam* which animates the whole cosmos springs from it. When once this ego starts into existence as a conscious being having objective consciousness of its own, we shall have to see what the result of this objective consciousness will be with reference to the one absolute and unconditioned existence from which it starts into manifested existence. From its objective standpoint, *Parabrahmam* appears to it as *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. Please bear this in mind and try to understand my words, for here is the root of the whole difficulty about *Purusha* and *Prakṛṭi* felt by the various writers on Veḍānṭic philosophy. Of course this *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is material to us. This *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is no more *Parabrahmam* than the bundle of attributes of this pillar is the pillar itself; *Parabrahmam* is an unconditioned and absolute reality, and *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is a sort of veil thrown over it. *Parabrahmam* by itself cannot be seen as it is. It is seen by the *Logos* with a veil thrown over it, and that veil is the mighty expanse of cosmic matter. It is the basis of material manifestations in the cosmos.

Again, *Parabrahmam*, after having appeared on the one hand as the Ego, and on the other as *Mūlaprakṛṭi*

acts as the one energy through the *Logos*. I shall explain to you what I mean by this acting through the *Logos* by a simile. Of course you must not stretch it very far; it is intended simply to help you to form some kind of conception of the *Logos*. For instance, the sun may be compared with the *Logos*; light and heat radiate from it, but its heat and energy exist in some unknown condition in space, and are diffused throughout space as visible light and heat through its instrumentality. Such is the view taken of the sun by the ancient philosophers. In the same manner *Parabrahmam* radiates from the *Logos*, and manifests itself as the light and energy of the *Logos*. Now we see the first manifestation of *Parabrahmam* is a Trinity, the highest Trinity that we are capable of understanding. It consists of *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, *Īshvara* or the *Logos*, and the conscious energy of the *Logos*, which is its power and light; and here we have the three principles upon which the whole cosmos seems to be based. First, we have matter; secondly, we have force—at any rate, the foundation of all the forces in the cosmos; and thirdly, we have the ego or the one root of Self, of which every other kind of self is but a manifestation or reflection. You must bear in mind that there is a clear line of distinction drawn between *Mūlaprakṛṭi* (which is, as it were, the veil thrown over *Parabrahmam* from the objective point of view of the *Logos*) and this energy which is radiated from it. Kṛshṇa, in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā, as I

shall hereafter point out, draws a clear line of distinction between the two; and the importance of the distinction will be seen when you take note of the various misconceptions to which a confusion of the two has given rise in various systems of philosophy. Now bear in mind that this *Mūlaprakṛṭi* which is the veil of *Parabrahmam* is called *Avyakṭam* in Sāṅkhya philosophy. It is also called *Kūtasṭha* in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā, simply because it is undifferentiated; even the literal meaning of this word conveys more or less the idea that it is undifferentiated as contrasted with differentiated matter. This light from the *Logos* is called *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā; it is the Gnostic *Sophia* and the Holy Ghost of the Christians. It is a mistake to suppose that Kṛṣhṇa, when considered as a *Logos*, is a manifestation of that *Avyakṭam* as is generally believed by a certain school of philosophers. He is on the other hand *Parabrahmam* manifested; and the Holy Ghost in its first origin emanates through the *Christos*. The reason why it is called mother of the *Christos* is this. When *Christos* manifests himself in man as his Saviour, it is from the womb, as it were, of this divine light that he is born. So it is only when the *Logos* is manifested in man that he becomes the child of this light of the *Logos*—this *Māyā*—but in the course of cosmic manifestation this *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, instead of being the mother of the *Logos*, should, strictly speaking, be called the daughter of the *Logos*. To make

this clearer, I may point out that this light is symbolised as *Gāyaṭrī*. You know *Gāyaṭrī* is not *Prakṛṭi*. It is considered as the light of the *Logos*, and in order to convey to our minds a definite image, it is represented as the light of the sun. But the sun from which it springs is not the physical sun that we see, but the central sun of the light of wisdom. This light is further called the *Mahāchaiṭanyam* of the whole cosmos. It is the life of the whole of nature. It will be observed that what manifests itself as light, as consciousness, and as force, is just one and the same energy. All the various kinds of forces that we know of, all the various modes of consciousness with which we are acquainted, and life manifested in every kind of organism, are but the manifestations of one and the same power, that power being the one that springs from the *Logos* originally. It will have to be surveyed in all these aspects, because the part that it really plays in the cosmos is one of considerable importance.

As far as we have gone we have arrived at, firstly, *Parabrahmam*; secondly, *Īshvara*; thirdly, the light manifested through *Īshvara*, which is called *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* in the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā, and lastly that *Mūlaprakṛṭi* which seems to be, as I have said, a veil thrown over *Parabrahmam*. Now creation or evolution is commenced by the intellectual energy of the *Logos*. The universe in its infinite details and with its wonderful laws, does not spring into existence by mere

chance, nor does it spring into existence merely on account of the potentialities locked up in *Mūlaprakṛṭi.* It comes into existence mainly through the instrumentality of the one source of energy and power existing in the cosmos, which we have named the *Logos,* and which is the one existing representative of the power and wisdom of *Parabrahmam.* Matter acquires all its attributes and all its powers which, in course of time, give such wonderful results in the course of evolution, by the action of this light that emanates from the *Logos* upon *Mūlaprakṛṭi.* From our standpoint, it will be very difficult to conceive what kind of matter that may be which has none of those tendencies which are commonly associated with all kinds of matter, and which only acquires all the various properties manifested by it on receiving, as it were, this light and energy from the *Logos.* This light of the *Logos* is the link, so to speak, between objective matter and the subjective thought of *Īṣhvara.* It is called in several Buḍḍhist books *Fohat.* It is the one instrument with which the *Logos* works.

What springs up in the *Logos* at first is simply an image, a conception of what it is to be in the cosmos. This light or energy catches the image and impresses it upon the cosmic matter which is already manifested. Thus spring into existence all the manifested solar systems. Of course the four principles we have enumerated are eternal, and are common to the

whole cosmos. There is not a place in the whole cosmos where these four energies are absent ; and these are the elements of the fourfold classification that I have adopted in dealing with the principles of the mighty cosmos itself.

Conceive this manifested solar system in all its principles and in its totality to constitute the *sṭhūla sharīra* of the whole cosmos. Look on this light which emanates from the *Logos* as corresponding to the *sūkṣhma sharīra* of the cosmos. Conceive further that this *Logos* which is the one germ from which the whole cosmos springs—which contains the image of the universe—stands in the position of the *kāraṇa sharīra* of the cosmos, existing as it does before the cosmos comes into existence. And lastly, conceive that *Parabrahmam* bears the same relation to the *Logos* as our *āṭmā* does to our *kāraṇa sharīra.*

These, it must be remembered, are the four general principles of the infinite cosmos, not of the solar system. These principles must not be confounded with those enumerated in dealing with the meaning of *Praṇava* in Veḍānṭic Philosophy and the Upanishats. In one sense *Praṇava* represents the macrocosm and in another sense the microcosm. From one point of view *Praṇava* is also intended to mean the infinite cosmos itself, but it is not in that light that it is generally explained in our Veḍānṭic books, and it will not be necessary for me to explain this aspect of *Praṇava.* With reference to this subject I may, however, allude

to one other point, which explains the reason why *Īshvara* is called *Verbum* or *Logos*; why, in fact, it is called *Shabḍa Brahmam*. The explanation I am going to give you will appear thoroughly mystical. But, if mystical, it has a tremendous significance when properly understood. Our old writers said that *Vach* is of four kinds. These are called *parā*, *pashyanṭi*, *maḍhyamā* and *vaikhari*. This statement you will find in the Ṛg Veḍa itself and in several of the Upanishaṭs. *Vaikhari Vach* is what we utter. Every kind of *Vaikhari Vach* exists in its *maḍhyamā*, further in its *pashyanṭi*, and ultimately in its *parā* form. The reason why this *Praṇava* is called *Vach* is this, that these four principles of the great cosmos correspond to these four forms of *Vach*. Now the whole manifested solar system exists in its *sūkṣhma* form in this light or energy of the *Logos*, because its image is caught up and transferred to cosmic matter, and again the whole cosmos must necessarily exist in the one source of energy from which this light emanates. The whole cosmos in its objective form is *Vaikhari Vach*, the light of the *Logos* is the *maḍhyamā* form, and the *Logos* itself the *pashyanṭi* form, and *Parabrahmam* the *parā* aspect of that *Vach*. It is by the light of this explanation that we must try to understand certain statements made by various philosophers to the effect that the manifested cosmos is the *Verbum* manifested as cosmos.

These four principles bear the same relationship to one another as do these four conditions or manifestations of *Vach*.

I shall now proceed to an examination of the principles that constitute the solar system itself. Here I find it useful to refer the explanations generally given with reference to *Praṇava* and the meaning of its *māṭras*. *Praṇava* is intended to represent man and also the manifested cosmos, the four principles in the one corresponding to the four in the other. The four principles in the manifested cosmos may be enumerated in this order. First, *Vaishwānara*. Now this *Vaishwānara* is not to be looked upon as merely the manifested objective world, but as the one physical basis from which the whole objective world started into existence. Beyond this, and next to this, is what is called *Hiraṇyagarbha*. This again is not to be confounded with the astral world, but must be looked upon as the basis of the astral world, bearing the same relationship to the astral world as *Vaishwānara* bears to the objective world. Next to this there is what is now and then called *Īshvara*; but as this word is likely to mislead, I shall not call it *Īshvara*, but by another name, also sanctioned by usage—*Sūṭrāṭmā*. And beyond these three it is generally stated there is *Parabrahmam*. As regards this fourth principle differences of opinion have sprung up, and from these differences any amount of difficulty has arisen. For this principle, we ought to have, as we have

for the cosmos, some principle or entity out of which the other three principles start into existence and which exist in it and by reason of it. If such be the case, no doubt we ought to accept the *Avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas as this fourth principle. This *Avyakṭam* is the *Mulāprakṛṭi* which I have already explained as the *veil* of *Parabrahmam* considered from the objective standpoint of the *Logos*, and this is the view adopted by the majority of the Sāṅkhyas. Into the details of the evolution of the solar system itself, it is not necessary for me to enter. You may gather some idea as to the way in which the various elements start into existence from these three principles into which *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is differentiated, by examining the lecture delivered by Professor Crookes a short time ago upon the so-called elements of modern chemistry. This lecture will at least give you some idea of the way in which the so-called elements spring from *Vaishwānara*, the most objective of these three principles, which seem to stand in the place of the *protyle* mentioned in that lecture. Except in a few particulars, this lecture seems to give the outlines of the theory of physical evolution on the plane of *Vaishwānara*, and is, as far as I know, the nearest approach made by modern investigators to the real occult theory on the subject.

These principles, in themselves, are so far beyond our common experience as to become objects of merely theoretical conception and inference, rather than

objects of practical knowledge. Of course if it is so difficult for us to understand these different principles as they exist in nature, it will be still more difficult for us to form any definite idea as to their basis. But at any rate the evolution and the work of differentiation of these principles is a matter which appertains more properly to the science of physics than to the science of spiritual ethics, and the fundamental principles that I have laid down will suffice for our present purpose. You must conceive, without my going through the whole process of evolution, that out of these three principles, having as their one foundation *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, the whole manifested solar system with all the various objects in it has started into being. Bear in mind also that the one energy which works out the whole process of evolution is that Light of the *Logos* which is diffused through all these principles and all their manifestations. It is the one Light that starts with a certain definite impulse communicated by the intellectual energy of the *Logos* and works out the whole programme from the commencement to the end of evolution. If we begin our examination from the lowest organisms, it will be seen that this one life is, as it were, undifferentiated. Now when we take, for instance, the mineral kingdom, or all those objects in the cosmos which we cannot, strictly speaking, call living organisms, we find this undifferentiated. In the course of time, when we reach plant life, it becomes differentiated to a considerable extent, and

organisms are formed which tend more and more towards differentiation. And when we reach animal life, we find that the differentiation is more complete, and this light moreover manifests itself as consciousness. It must not be supposed that consciousness is a sort of independent entity created by this Light; it is a mode or a manifestation of the Light itself, which is life. By the time we reach man, this Light becomes differentiated and forms that centre or ego that gives rise to all the mental and physical progress that we see in the process of cosmic evolution. This differentiation results in the first instance from the environment of particular organisms. The various actions evoked in a given organism and those which it evokes in other organisms or in its surroundings, and the actions which it generates in itself at that stage, can hardly be called *Karma*; still its life and actions may perhaps have a certain effect in determining the future manifestations of that life-energy which is acting in it. By the time we reach man, this one Light becomes differentiated into certain Monads, and hence individuality is fixed.

As individuality is rendered more and more definite, and becomes more and more differentiated from other individualities by man's own surroundings, and the intellectual and moral impulses he generates and the effect of his own *Karma*, the principles of which he is composed become more defined. There are

four principles in man. First, there is the physical body, about which we need not go into details, as they appertain more to the field of enquiry of the physiologist than to that of the religious investigator. No doubt certain branches of physiology do become matters of considerable importance in dealing with certain subjects connected with Yoga Philosophy; but we need not discuss those questions at present.

Next there is the *sūkṣhma sharīra.* This bears to the physical body the same relationship which the astral world bears to the objective plane of the solar system. It is sometimes called *kāmarūpa* in our Theosophical dissertations. This unfortunate expression has given rise also to a misconception that the principle called *kāma* represents this astral body itself, and is transformed into it. But it is not so. It is composed of elements of quite a different nature. Its senses are not so differentiated and localised as in the physical body, and, being composed of finer materials, its powers of action and thought are considerably greater than those found in the physical organism. *Kāraṇa sharīra* can only be conceived as a centre of *Prājña*—a centre of force or energy into which the third principle (or *Sūṭrāṭmā*) of the cosmos was differentiated by reason of the same impulse which has brought about the differentiation of all these cosmic principles. And now the question is, what is it that

completes this trinity and makes it a quaternary?[1] Of course this Light of the *Logos*. As I have already said, it is a sort of Light that permeates every kind of organism, and so in this trinity it is manifested in every one of the *upādhis* as the real *jīva* or the ego of man. Now, in order to enable you to have a clear conception of the matter, I shall express my ideas in figurative language. Suppose, for instance, we compare the *Logos* itself to the sun. Suppose I take a clear mirror in my hand, catch a reflection of the sun, make the ray reflect from the surface of the mirror—say upon a polished metallic plate—and make the rays which are reflected in their turn from the plate fall upon a wall. Now we have three images, one being clearer than the other, and one being more resplendent than the other. I can compare the clear mirror to *kāraṇa sharīra*, the metallic plate to the astral body, and the wall to the physical body. In each case a definite *bimbam* is formed, and that *bimbam* or reflected image is for the time being considered as the self. The *bimbam* formed on the astral body gives rise to the idea of self in it, when considered apart from the physical body; the *bimbam* formed in the *kāraṇa sharīra* gives rise to the most prominent form of individuality that man possesses. You will further see that these various *bimbams* are not of the same

[1] The reflected image of the *Logos* formed by the action of this Light, or *kāraṇa sharīra*, may be considered as the fourth principle in man, and it has been so considered by certain philosophers. But in reality the real entity is the light itself and not the reflected image.

lustre. The lustre of this *bimbam* you may compare to man's knowledge, and it grows feebler and feebler as the reflection is transferred from a clear *upāḍhi* to one less clear, and so on till you get to the physical body. Our knowledge depends mainly on the condition of the *upāḍhi*, and you will also observe that, just as the image of the sun on a clear surface of water may be disturbed and rendered invisible by the motion of the water itself, so by a man's passions and emotions he may render the image of his true self disturbed and distorted in its appearance, and even make the image so indistinct as to be altogether unable to perceive its light.

You will further see that this idea of self is a delusive one. Almost every great writer on Veḍānṭic philosophy, as also both Buḍḍha and Shaṅkarāchārya, have distinctly alleged that it is a delusive idea. You must not suppose that these great men said that the idea of self was delusive for the same reason which led John Stuart Mill to suppose that the idea of self is manufactured from a concatenation or series of mental states. It is not a manufactured idea, as it were, not a secondary idea which has arisen from any series of mental states. It is said to be delusive, as I have been trying to explain, because the real Self is the *Logos* itself, and what is generally considered as the ego is but its reflection. If you say, however, that a reflected image cannot act as an individual being, I have simply to remind you that my simile cannot be carried very

far. We find that each distinct image can form a separate centre. You will see in what difficulty it will land us if you deny this, and hold the self to be a separate entity in itself. If so, while I am in my objective state of consciousness, my ego is something existing as a real entity in the physical body itself. How is it possible to transfer the same to the astral body? Then, again, it has also to be transferred to the *kāraṇa sharīra.* We shall find a still greater difficulty in transferring this entity to the *Logos* itself, and you may depend upon it that unless a man's individuality or ego can be transferred to the *Logos,* immortality is only a name. In certain peculiar cases it will be very difficult to account for a large number of phenomena on the basis that this self is some kind of energy or some existing monad transferred from *upāḍhi to upāḍhi.*

In the opinion of the Veḍānṭists, and, as I shall hereafter point out, in the opinion of Kṛshṇa also, man is a quaternary. He has first the physical body or *sṭhūla sharīra,* secondly the astral body or *sūkṣhma sharīra,* thirdly the seat of his higher individuality, the *kāraṇa sharīra,* and fourthly and lastly, his *āṭmā.* There is no doubt a difference of opinion as to the exact nature of the fourth principle, as I have already said, which has given rise to various misconceptions. Now, for instance, according to some followers of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, at any rate those who are called *nirīshwara sāṅkhyas,* man has these three principles,

with their *Avyakṭam* to complete the quaternary. This *Avyakṭam* is *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, or rather *Parabrahmam* manifested in *Mūlaprakṛṭi* as its *upāḍhi*. In this view *Parabrahmam* is really the fourth principle, the highest principle in man; and the other three principles simply exist in it and by reason of it. That is to say, this *Avyakṭam* is the one principle which is the root of all self, which becomes differentiated in the course of evolution, or rather which appears to be differentiated in the various organisms, which subsists in every kind of *upāḍhi*, and which is the real spiritual entity which a man has to reach.

Now let us see what will happen according to this hypothesis. The *Logos* is entirely shut out; it is not taken notice of at all; and that is the reason why these people have been called *nirīshwara sāṅkhyas*, (not because they have denied the existence of *Parabrahmam*—for this they did not—but) because they have not taken notice of the *Logos* and its Light—the two most important entities in nature—in classifying the principles of man.

SECOND LECTURE

In my last lecture I tried to trace the course of the first beginnings of cosmic evolution, and in doing so I indicated with a certain amount of definiteness the four main principles that operate in the infinite cosmos. I also enumerated the four principles that seemed to form the basis of the whole manifested solar system, and defined the nature of the four principles into which I have divided the constitution of man. I hope that you will bear in mind the explanations that I have given, because it is on a clear understanding of these principles that the whole Vedāṇṭic doctrine is explicable; and, moreover, on account of misconceptions introduced as regards the nature of these principles, the religious philosophies of various nations have become terribly confused, and inferences have been drawn from wrong assumptions, which would not necessarily follow from a correct understanding of these principles.

In order to make my position clear, I have yet to make a few more remarks about some of these principles. You will remember that I have divided the solar system itself into four main principles and called them by the names assigned to

them in treatises on what may be called *Ṭāraka Yoga*. *Tāram,* or *Praṇava* is also the symbol of the manifested man. And the three *Māṭras* without the *Arḍhamāṭra* symbolise the three principles, or the three manifestations of the orginal *Mūlaprakṛṭi* in the solar system. *Sāṅkhya Yoga,* properly so called, mainly deals with these three principles and the evolution from them of all material organisms. I use the word material to indicate, not only the physical and astral organisms but also organisms on the plane higher than the astral. Much of what lies on this plane also is in my opinion physical, though perhaps it may differ in its constitution from the known forms of matter on the ordinary objective plane. The whole of this manifested solar system is, strictly speaking, within the field of physical research. As yet we have only been surveying the superficies of the outward cosmos. It is that, and that alone, which physical science has, up to this time reached. I have not the slightest doubt that in course of time physical science will be able to penetrate deep into the underlying basis, that corresponds to the *Sūṭrāṭmā* of our Veḍānṭic writers.

It is the province of Sāṅkhya philosophy to trace from the three component parts of *Mūlaprakṛṭi* all the various physical manifestations. It must not, however, be supposed that I in any way authorise the way in which Sāṅkhya philosophy, as at present understood, traces out the origin of these manifestations.

On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that enquirers into physical science in the West, like Professor Crookes and others, will arrive at truer results than are contained in the existing systems of Sāṅkhya philosophy known to the public. Occult science has, of course, a definite theory of its own to propound for the origin of these organisms, but that is a matter that has always been kept in the background, and the details of that theory are not necessary for the purpose of explaining the doctrine of the Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā. It will be sufficient for the present to note what the field of Sāṅkhya philosophy is, and what it is that comes within the horizon of physical science.

We can form no idea as to the kind of beings that exist on the astral plane, and still less are we able to do so in the case of those beings that live on the plane anterior to the astral. To the modern mind, everything else, beyond and beside this ordinary plane of existence, is a perfect blank. But occult science does definitely formulate the existence of these finer planes of being, and the phenomena that now manifest themselves in the so-called spiritualistic séances will give us some idea of the beings living on the astral plane. It is well known that in most of our *Purāṇas*, *Ḍevas* are mentioned as existing in *swarga*.

All the *Ḍevagaṇams* mentioned in the *Purāṇas* are not in *swarga*. *Vasus*, *Rudras*, *Āḍiṭyas* and some

other classes are no doubt *Ḍevas* strictly so-called. But *Yakshas, Ganḍharvas, Kinnaras* and several other *Gaṇams* must be included amongst the beings that exist in the plane of the astral light.

These beings that inhabit the astral plane are called by the general name of elementals in our Theosophical writings. But besides elementals, properly so-called, there are still higher beings, and it is to these latter that the name *Ḍeva* is strictly applicable. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the word *Ḍeva* means a god, and that because we have thirty-three crores of *Ḍevas,* we therefore worship thirty-three crores of gods. This is an unfortunate blunder generally committed by Europeans. *Ḍeva* is a kind of spiritual being, and because the same word is used in ordinary parlance to mean god, it by no means follows that we have and worship thirty-three crores of gods. These beings, as may be naturally inferred, have a certain affinity with one of the three component *upāḍhis* into which we have divided man.

One organism has always a certain affinity with another organism composed of the same materials and existing on the same plane. As may naturally be expected, the astral body of man has affinity with the elementals, and the so-called *kāraṇa sharīra* of man with the *Ḍevas.* The ancient writers on Hinḍū philosophy have divided the cosmos into three *lokas.* The first is *bhūloka,* the second *bhuvarloka,* and the third *suvarloka.* *Bhūloka* is the physical plane with

which we are generally acquainted. *Bhuvarloka* is, strictly speaking, the astral plane. It is sometimes called *anṭarīksham* in the Upaniṣhaṭs. But this term is not to be understood as simply meaning the whole extent of the atmosphere with which we are acquainted. The word *Anṭarīksham* is used, not in its general sense, but in a technical one belonging to the philosophical terminology adopted by the authors of the works in which it occurs. *Suvarloka* is what is generally known as *swargam.* At any rate it is the *ḍevachan* of the Theosophical writings. In this place, called *ḍevachan* by the Buḍḍhists, and *swargam* by the Hinḍūs, we locate the higher orders of the so-called *Ḍevagaṇams.*

There is one more statement I have to make with reference to the three *upāḍhis* in the human being. Of these what is called the *kāraṇa sharīra* is the most important. It is so, because it is in that that the higher individuality of man exists. Birth after birth a new physical body comes into existence, and perishes when earthly life is over. The astral body, when once separated from the *kāraṇa sharīra,* may perhaps live on for some time, owing to the impulse of action and existence, already communicated to it during life, but, as these influences are cut off from the source whence they originally sprung, the force communicated, as it were, stands by itself, and sooner or later the astral organism becomes completely dissolved into its component parts. But

kāraṇa sharira is a body or organism, which is capable of existing independently of the astral body. Its plane of existence is called *sūṭrāṭmā*, because, like so many beads strung on a thread, successive personalities are strung on this *kāraṇa sharīra*, as the individual passes through incarnation after incarnation. By personality I mean that persistent idea of self, with its definite associations, so far as those associations appertain to the experiences of one earthly incarnation.

Of course all the associations or ideas of mental states which a human being may experience are not necessarily communicated to the astral man, much less to the *kāraṇa sharīra*. Of all the experiences of the physical man, the astral man, or the *kāraṇa sharīra* beyond it, can only assimilate those whose constitution and nature are similar to its own. It is, moreover, but consistent with justice that all our mental states should not be preserved; as most of them are concerned merely with the daily avocations, or even the physical wants of the human being, there is no object to be gained by their continued preservation. But all that goes deep into the intellectual nature of man, all the higher emotions of the human soul and the intellectual tastes generated in man with all his higher aspirations, do become impressed almost indelibly on the *kāraṇa sharīra*. The astral body is simply the seat of the lower nature of man. His animal passions and emotions, and those ordinary thoughts which are generally connected with

the physical wants of man, may no doubt communicate themselves to the astral man, but higher than this they do not go.

This *kāraṇa sharīra* is what passes as the real ego, which subsists through incarnation after incarnation, adding in each incarnation something to its fund of experiences, and evolving a higher individuality as the resultant of the whole process of assimilation. It is for this reason that the *kāraṇa sharīra* is called the ego of man, and in certain systems of philosophy it is called the *jīva*.

It must be clearly borne in mind that this *kāraṇa sharira* is primarily the result of the action of the light of the *Logos*, which is its life and energy, and which is, further, its source of consciousness on that plane of *Mūlaprakṛṭi* which we have called *sūṭrāṭmā*, and which is its physical or material basis.

Out of the combination of these two elements, and from the action of the energy of the light emanating from the *Logos* upon that particular kind of matter that constitutes its physical frame, a kind of individuality is evolved.

I have already said that individual existence, or differentiated conscious existence, is evolved out of the one current of life, which sets the evolutionary machine in motion. I pointed out that it is this very current of life that gradually gives rise to individual organisms as it proceeds on its mission. Furthermore it begins to manifest what we call conscious life, and,

when we come to man, we find that his conscious individuality is clearly and completely defined by the operation of this force. In producing this result several subsidiary forces, which are generated by the peculiar conditions of time, space and environment, co-operate with this one life. What is generally called *kāraṇa sharīra* is but the natural product of the action of those very forces that have operated to bring about this result. When once that plane of consciousness is reached in the path of progress that includes the voluntary actions of man, it will be seen that those voluntary actions not only preserve the individuality of the *kāraṇa sharīra* but render it more and more definite, as birth after birth further progress is attained, and thus keep up the continued existence of the *jīva* as an individual monad. So in one sense the *kāraṇa sharīra* is the result of kārmic impulses. It is the child of *Karma* as it were. It lives with it, and will disappear if the influence of *Karma* can be annihilated. The astral body on the other hand is, to a great extent, the result of the physical existence of man, as far as that existence is concerned with his physical wants, associations and cravings. We may therefore suppose that the persistence of the astral body after death will, under ordinary circumstances, be more or less proportionate to the strength of these emotions and animal passions.

Now let us enquire what, constituted as man is, are the rules to which he is generally subject, and the

goal towards which all evolution is progressing. It is only after this has been determined, that we shall be in a position to see whether any special rules can be prescribed for his guidance that are likely to render his evolutionary progress more rapid than it would otherwise be.

What happens in the case of ordinary men after death is this. First, the *kāraṇa sharīra* and the astral body separate themselves from the physical body; when that takes place, the physical body loses its life and energy. Yesterday I tried to explain the connection between the three bodies and the energy of life acting within them, by comparing the action of this life to the action of a sunbeam falling successively on three material objects. It will be seen from this comparison that the light reflected on to the astral body, or rather into the astral body, is the light that radiates from the *kāraṇa sharīra*. From the astral body it is again reflected on to the *sṭhūla sharīra*, constitutes its life and energy, and develops that sense of ego that we experience in the physical body. Now it is plain that, if the *kāraṇa sharīra* is removed, the astral body ceases to receive any reflection. The *kāraṇa sharīra* can exist independently of the astral body, but the astral body cannot survive the separation of the *kāraṇa sharīra*. Similarly the physical body can go on living so long as it is connected with the astral body and the *kāraṇa sharīra*; but, when these two are removed, the physical body will perish. The

only way for the life current to pass to the physical body is through the medium of the astral body. The physical body is dissolved when separated from the astral body because the impulse that animated it is removed. As the *kāraṇa sharīra* is on the plane of *ḍevachan*, the only place to which it can go on separation from the physical body is *ḍevachan*, or *swargam*; but in separating itself from the astral body it takes with it all those impulses that were accumulated by the karma of the man during his successive incarnations.

These impulses subsist in it, and perhaps it does enjoy a new life in *ḍevachan*—a life unlike any with which we are acquainted, but a life quite as natural to the entity that enjoys it as our conscious existence seems to be to us now. These impulses give rise to a further incarnation, because there is a certain amount of energy locked up in them, which must find its manifestation on the physical plane. It is thus karma that leads it on from incarnation to incarnation.

The natural region of the astral body is the *bhuvarloka* or astral plane. To the astral plane it goes, and there it is detained. It very rarely descends into the physical plane, for the simple reason that the physical plane has no natural attraction for it. Moreover it necessarily follows that, just as the *kāraṇa sharīra* cannot remain on the physical plane, the astral body cannot remain there either. This astral body loses its life

impulse when the *kāraṇa sharīra* is separated from it. When once its source of life and energy is thus removed from it, it is naturally deprived of the only spring of life that can enable it to subsist. But astral matter being of a far finer constitution than physical matter, energy once communicated to it subsists for a longer time than when communicated to physical matter. When once separated from the astral body, the physical body dies very rapidly, but in the case of the astral body some time is required before complete dissolution can take place, because the impulses already communicated to it still keep the particles together, and its period of *post mortem* existence is proportionate to the strength of those impulses. Till this strength is exhausted the astral body holds together. The time of its independent existence on the astral plane will thus depend on the strength of its craving for life and the intensity of its unsatisfied desires. This is the reason why, in the case of suicides and those who die premature deaths, having at the time of death a strong passion or a strong desire that they were unable to satisfy during life, but on the fulfilment of which their whole energy was concentrated, the astral body subsists for a certain length of time, and may even make desperate efforts for the purpose of descending into the physical plane to bring about the accomplishment of its object. Most of the spiritualistic phenomena are to be accounted for upon this principle, and also upon the principle

that many of the phenomena exhibited at séances are really produced by elementals (which naturally subsist on the astral plane) masquerading, as it were, in the garb of elementaries or *pisāchas.*

I need not, however, enter further into this branch of the subject, as it has but a very remote bearing upon the teachings of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā* with which I am concerned. Suffice it to say, that what has been stated is all that ordinarily takes place at the death of a man, but there are certain kinds of karma which may present exceptions to the general law. Suppose, for instance, a man has devoted all his life to the evocation of elementals. In such a case either the elementals take possession of the man and make a medium of him, or, if they do not do that completely, they take possession of his astral body and absorb it at the time of death. In the latter case the astral body, associated as it is with an independent elemental being, will subsist for a considerable length of time. But though elemental worship may lead to mediumship—to irresponsible mediumship in the majority of cases—and may confuse a man's intellect, and make him morally worse than he was before, these elementals will not be able to destroy the *kāraṇa sharīra.* Still it is by no means a desirable thing that we should place ourselves under the control of elementals.

There is another kind of worship, however, which a man may follow, and which may lead to far more

serious results. What may happen to the astral body may also happen to the *kāraṇa sharīra*. The *kāraṇa sharīra* bears the same relation to the *Ḍevas* in *swargam* that the astral body does to the elementals on the astral plane. In this *ḍevaloka* there are beings, or entities, some vicious and some good, and, if a man who wishes to evoke these powers were to fix his attention upon them, he might in course of time attract these powers to himself, and it is quite possible that when the force generated by the concentration of his attention upon these beings attains a certain amount of strength, the *kāraṇa sharīra* may be absorbed into one of these *Ḍevas*, just as the astral body may be absorbed into an elemental. This is a far more serious result than any that can happen to man in the case of elemental worship, for the simple reason that he has no more prospect of reaching the *Logos*.

The whole of his individuality is absorbed into one of these beings, and it will subsist as long as that being exists, and no longer. When cosmic *pralaya* comes it will be dissolved as all these beings will be dissolved. For him there is no immortality. He may indeed have life for millions of years, but what are millions of years to immortality? You will recollect that it is said in Mr. Sinnett's book that there is such a thing as immortality in evil. The statement, as it stands, is no doubt an exaggeration. What Mr. Sinnett meant to say was that, when those who follow the left-hand path evoke certain powers which are

wicked in their nature, they may transfer their own individualities to those powers, and subsist in them until the time of cosmic *pralaya*. These would then become formidable powers in the cosmos, and would interfere to a considerable extent in the affairs of mankind, and even prove far more troublesome, so far as humanity is concerned, than the genuine powers themselves, on account of the association of a human individuality with one of these powers. It was for this reason that all great religions have inculcated the great truth, that man should not, for the sake of gain or profit, or for the acquisition of any object, however tempting for the time being, worship any such powers, but should wholly devote his attention and worship to the one true *Logos* accepted by every true and great religion in the world, as that alone can lead a man safely along the true moral path, and enable him to rise higher and higher, until he lives in it as an immortal being, as the manifested *Īṣhvara* of the cosmos, and as the source, if necessary, of spiritual enlightenment to generations to come. It is towards this end, which may be hastened in certain cases, that all evolution is tending. The one great power, that is as it were guiding the whole course of evolution, leading nature on towards its goal, so to speak, is the light of the *Logos*. The *Logos* is, as it were, the pattern, and emanating from it is this light of life. It goes forth into the world with this pattern imprinted upon it, and, after going through the whole

cycle of evolution, it tries to return to the *Logos*, whence it had its rise. Evolutionary progress is effected by the continual perfecting of the *upāḍhi*, or organism, through which this light works. In itself it has no need of improvement. What is perfected is neither the *Logos*, nor the light of the *Logos*, but the *upāḍhi* or physical frame through which this light is acting. I have already said that it is upon the purity and nature of this *upāḍhi* that the manifested clearness and refulgence of the *Logos* mainly depends. As time goes on, man's intelligence on the spiritual, astral and physical planes will become more and more perfect, as the *upāḍhis* are perfected, until a certain point is reached when he will be enabled to make the final attempt to perceive and recognise his *Logos*, unless he chooses wilfully to shut his eyes, and prefers perdition to immortality. It is towards this end that nature is working.

I have pointed out the fact that there are certain cases which may cause a disturbance in the general progress, and I have mentioned the causes that may facilitate that progress. All the initiations that man ever invented were invented for the purpose of giving men a clear idea of the *Logos*, to point out the goal, and to lay down rules by which it is possible to facilitate the approach to the end towards which nature is constantly working.

These are the premises from which Kṛṣhṇa starts. Whether by express statements, or by necessary

implications, all these propositions are present in this book, and, taking his stand on these fundamental propositions, Kṛshṇa proceeds to construct his practical theory of life.

In stating this theory I have not made any reference to particular passages in the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*. By constantly turning to the detached passages in which these propositions are expressed or implied, I should have only created confusion; it therefore seemed better to begin by stating the theory in my own language, in order to give you a connected idea of it as a whole. I do not think it will be allowed by every follower of every religion in India, that these are the propositions from which Kṛshṇa started. The theory has been misunderstood by a considerable number of philosophers, and, in course of time, the speculations of the Sāṅkhyas have introduced a source of error, which has exercised a most important influence on the development of Hinḍū philosophy. There is not, however, the slightest doubt in my own mind, that what I have said includes the basis of the real Veḍānṭic philosophy. Having but little time at my command, I have thought it unnecessary to cite authorities; had I done so it would have taken me not three days, but three years, to explain the philosophy of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*. I shall leave it to you to examine these propositions and carefully to ascertain how far they seem to underlie, not merely Hinḍūism, but

Buḍḍhism, the ancient philosophies of the Egyptians and the Chaldæans, the speculations of the Rosicrucians, and almost every other system having the remotest connection with occultism from times long antecedent to the so-called historic periods.

I will now turn to the book itself:

Kṛshṇa is generally supposed to be an *Avaṭār.* This theory of *Avaṭārs* plays a very important part in Hinḍū philosophy; and, unless it is properly understood, it is likely that great misconceptions will arise from the acceptance of the current views regarding this *Avaṭār.* It is generally supposed that Kṛshṇa is the *Avaṭāra* of the one great personal God who exists in the cosmos. Of course those who hold this view make no attempt to explain how this one great personal God succeeded in setting up an intimate connection with the physical body of Kṛshṇa, constituted as the physical body of every man is, or even with a personality, or human individuality, that seems to be precisely similar to that of any other human being. And how are we to explain the theory of *Avaṭārs,* as generally stated, with reference to the view of this particular *Avaṭār* to which I have referred? This view is without any support. The *Logos* in itself is not the one personal God of the cosmos. The great *Parabrahmam* behind it is indeed one and *niramsha,* undifferentiated and eternally existing, but that *Parabrahmam* can never manifest itself as any of these *Avaṭārs.* It does, of course, manifest itself in

a peculiar way as the whole cosmos, or rather as the supposed basis, or the one essence, on which the whole cosmos seems to be superimposed, the one foundation for every existence. But it can manifest itself in a manner approaching the conception of a personal God, only when it manifests itself as the *Logos*. If *Avaṭārs* are possible at all, they can only be so with reference to the *Logos*, or *Īshvara*, and not by any means with reference to what I have called *Parabrahmam*. But still there remains the question, what is an *Avaṭār*? According to the general theory I have laid down, in the case of every man who becomes a *Mukṭa* there is a union with the *Logos*. It may be conceived, either as the soul being raised to the *Logos* or as the *Logos* descending from its high plane to associate itself with the soul. In the generality of cases, this association of the soul with the *Logos* is only completed after death—the last death which that individual has to go through.

But in some special cases the *Logos* does descend to the plane of the soul and associate itself with the soul during the lifetime of the individual; but these cases are very rare. In the case of such beings, while they still exist as ordinary men on the physical plane, instead of having for their soul merely the reflection of the *Logos*, they have the *Logos* itself. Such beings have appeared. Buḍḍhists say that in the case of Buḍḍha there was this permanent union, when he attained what they call *Paranirvāṇa* nearly twenty

years before the death of his physical body. Christians say that the *Logos* was made flesh, as it were, and was born as Christ—as Jesus—though the Christians do not go into a clear analysis of the propositions they lay down. There are, however, certain sections of Christians who take a more philosophical view of the question, and say that the divine *Logos* associated itself with the man named Jesus at some time during his career, and that it was only after that union that he began to perform his miracles and show his power as a great reformer and saviour of mankind.

Whether this union took place as a special case in the case of Jesus, or whether it was such a union as would take place in the case of every Mahāṭma or Mahāṛṣhi when he becomes a *Jīvanmukṭa,* we cannot say, unless we know a great deal more about him than what the Bible can teach us. In the case of Kṛṣhṇa the same question arises. Mahāviṣhṇu is a God, and is a representative of the *Logos*; he is considered as the *Logos* by the majority of Hinḍūs. From this it must not however be inferred that there is but one *Logos* in the cosmos, or even that but one form of *Logos* is possible in the cosmos. For the present I am only concerned with this form of the *Logos,* and it seems to be the foundation of the teachings we are considering. There are two views which you can take with reference to such human *Avaṭārs,* as, for instance, Rāma, Kṛṣhṇa, and Parashurāma. Some Vaiṣhṇavites deny that Buḍḍha was an *Avaṭār*

of Vishṇu. But that was an exceptional case and is very little understood by either Vaishṇavites or Buḍḍhists. Parashurāma's *Avaṭār* will certainly be disputed by some writers. I believe that, looking at the terrible things he did, the Maḍhwas thought that, in the case of Parashurāma, there was no real *Avaṭār*, but a mere overshadowing of the man by Mahāvishṇu. But, setting aside disputed cases, we have two undisputed human *Avaṭārs*—Rāma and Kṛshṇa.

Take for instance the case of Kṛshṇa. In this case two views are possible. We may suppose that Kṛshṇa, as an individual, was a man who had been evoluting for millions of years, and had attained great spiritual perfection, and that in the course of his spiritual progress the *Logos* descended to him and associated itself with his soul. In that case it is not the *Logos* that manifested itself as Kṛshṇa, but Kṛshṇa who raised himself to the position of the *Logos*. In the case of a Mahāṭma who becomes a *Jīvanmukṭa*, it is his soul, as it were, that is transformed into the *Logos*. In the case of a *Logos* descending into a man, it does so, not chiefly by reason of that man's spiritual perfection, but for some ulterior purpose of its own for the benefit of humanity. In this case it is the *Logos* that descends to the plane of the soul and manifests its energy in and through the soul, and not the soul that ascends to the plane of the *Logos*.

Theoretically it is possible for us to entertain either of these two views. But there is one difficulty. If we are at liberty to call that man an *Avaṭār* who becomes a *Jīvanmukṭa*, we shall be obliged to call Shuka, Vasishtha, Ḍūrvāsa and perhaps the whole number of the Mahārshis, who have become *Jīvanmukṭas*, *Avaṭārs*; but they are not generally called *Avaṭārs*. No doubt some great Ṛshis are enumerated in the list of *Avaṭārs*, given for instance in the Bhāgavaṭ, but somehow no clear explanation is given for the fact that the ten *Avaṭārs* ordinarily enumerated are looked upon as the *Avaṭārs* of Mahāvishṇu, and the others as his manifestations, or beings in whom his light and knowledge were placed for the time being; or, for some reason or other, these others are not supposed to be *Avaṭārs* in the strict sense of the word. But, if these are not *Avaṭārs*, then we shall have to suppose that Kṛshṇa and Rāma are called *Avaṭārs*, not because we have in them an instance of a soul that had become a *Jīvanmukṭa* and so had become associated with the *Logos*, but because the *Logos* descended to the plane of the soul, and, associating itself with the soul, worked in and through it on the plane of humanity for some great thing that had to be done in the world. I believe this latter view will be found to be correct on examination. Our respect for Kṛshṇa need not in any way be lessened on that account. The real Kṛshṇa is not the man in and

through whom the *Logos* appeared, but the *Logos* itself. Perhaps our respect will only be enhanced, when we see that this is the case of the *Logos* descending into a human being for the good of humanity. It is not encumbered with any particular individuality in such a case, and has perhaps greater power to exert itself for the purpose of doing good to humanity—not merely for the purpose of doing good to one man, but for the purpose of saving millions.

There are two dark passages in the *Mahābhāraṭa*, which will be found very hard nuts for the advocates of the orthodox theory to crack. To begin with Rāma. Suppose Rāma was not the individual monad plus the *Logos*, but in some unaccountable manner the *Logos* made flesh. Then, when the physical body disappeared there should be nothing remaining but the *Logos*—there should be no individual ego to follow its own course. That seems to be the inevitable result, if we are to accept the orthodox theory. But there is a statement made by Nāraḍa in the Lokapāla Sabhā Varṇanā, in the *Mahābhāraṭa*, in which he says, speaking of the court of Yama, who is one of the *Ḍevas*, that Ḍasaraṭha Rāma was one of the individuals present there. Now, if the individual Rāma was merely a *māyā*—not in the sense in which every human being is a *māyā* but in a special sense—there is not the slightest reason why he should subsist after the purpose for which this *māyā* garb was wanted was accomplished. It is stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* that

the *Logos* went to its place of abode when Rāma died, yet we find, in the *Mahābhārata*, Ḍasaraṭha Rāma mentioned, together with a number of other kings, as an individual present in *Yamaloka*, which, at the highest, takes us only up to *devachan*. This assertion becomes perfectly consistent with the theory I have laid down, if that is properly understood. Rāma was an individual, constituted like every other man; probably he had had several incarnations before, and was destined, even after his one great incarnation, to have several subsequent births. When he appeared as Rāma *Avatār*, it was not Rāma's soul transformed into the *Logos*, or rather Rāma himself as *Jīvanmukṭa*, that did all the great deeds narrated in the *Rāmāyaṇa*—allegorical as it is—but it was the *Logos*, or Mahāviṣhṇu, that descended to the plane of the soul and associated itself for the time being with a particular soul for the purpose of acting through it. Again, in the case of Kṛṣhṇa there is a similar difficulty to be encountered. Turn, for instance, to the end of the Mousala Parva in the *Mahābhārata*, where you will find a curious passage. Speaking of Kṛṣhṇa's death, the author says that the soul went to heaven—which corresponds to *devachan*—where it was received with due honours by all the *Devas*. Then it is said that Nārāyaṇa departed from that place to his own place, Nārāyaṇa being the symbol of the *Logos*. Immediately after, there follows a stanza describing the existence of Kṛṣhṇa in *swargam*, and further on we find that when

Ḍharmarājā's soul went into *swargam* he found Kṛshṇa there. How are these two statements to be reconciled? Unless we suppose that Nārāyan, whose energy and wisdom were manifested through the man Kṛshṇa, was a separate spiritual power manifesting itself for the time being through this individual, there is no solution of the difficulty. Now, from these two statements we shall not be far wrong in inferring that the *Avaṭārs* we are speaking of were the manifestations of one and the same power, the *Logos*, which the great Hinḍū writers of old called Mahāvishṇu. Who then is this Mahāvishṇu? Why should this *Logos* in particular, if there are several other *Logoi* in the universe, take upon itself the care of humanity, and manifest itself in the form of various *Avaṭārs*; and further, is it possible for every other adept, after he becomes associated with the *Logos*, to descend as an *Avaṭār* in the same manner for the good of humanity?

A clear discussion of these questions will lead us into considerations that go far down into the mysteries of occult science, to explain which clearly I should have to take into account a number of theories that can only be communicated at the time of initiation. Possibly some light will be thrown upon the subject in the forthcoming *Secret Doctrine*, but it would be premature for me to discuss the question at this stage. It will be sufficient for me to say that this Mahāvishṇu seems to be the Ḍhyan Chohan that first appeared on this planet when

human evolution commenced during this *kalpa*, who set the evolutionary progress in motion, and whose duty it is to watch over the interests of mankind until the seven *Manvanṭars* through which we are passing are over. It may be that this *Logos* itself was associated with a *Jīvanmukṭa*, or a great Mahāṭma of a former *kalpa*. However that may be, it is a *Logos*, and as such only it is of importance to us at present. Perhaps in former *kalpas*, of which there have been millions, that *Logos* might have associated itself with a series of Mahāṭmas, and all their individualities might have been subsisting in it; nevertheless it has a distinct individuality of its own, it is *Īṣhvara*, and it is only as a *Logos* in the abstract that we have to consider it for present purposes. This explanation, however, I have thought it necessary to give, for the purpose of enabling you to understand certain statements made by Kṛṣhṇa, which will not become intelligible unless read in connection with what I have said.

THIRD LECTURE

In this lecture I shall consider the premises I have laid down with special reference to the various passages in which they seem to be indicated in this book.

It will be remembered that I started with the very first cause, which I called *Parabrahmam.* Any positive definition of this principle is of course impossible, and a negative definition is all that can be attempted from the very nature of the case. It is generally believed, at any rate by a certain class of philosophers, that Kṛshṇa himself is *Parabrahmam*—that he is the personal God who is *Parabrahmam*—but the words used by Kṛshṇa in speaking of *Parabrahmam*, and the way in which he deals with the subject, clearly show that he draws a distinction between himself and *Parabrahmam.*

No doubt he is a manifestation of *Parabrahmam*, as every *Logos* is. And *Praṭyagāṭma* is *Parabrahmam* in the sense in which that proposition is laid down by the Aḍwaiṭis. This statement is at the bottom of all Aḍwaiṭi philosophy, but is very often misunderstood. When Aḍwaiṭis say "*Ahameva Parabrahmam* ", they do not mean to say that this *ahaṅkāram* (egotism)

is *Parabrahmam,* but that the only true *self* in the cosmos, which is the *Logos* or *Praṭyagāṭma,* is a manifestation of *Parabrahmam.*

It will be noticed that when Kṛṣhṇa is speaking of himself he never uses the word *Parabrahmam,* but places himself in the position of *Praṭyagāṭma,* and it is from this standpoint that we constantly find him speaking. Whenever he speaks of *Praṭyagāṭma,* he speaks of himself, and whenever he speaks of *Parabrahmam,* he speaks of it as being something different from himself.

I will now go through all the passages in which reference is made to *Parabrahmam* in this book. The first passage to which I shall call your attention is chapter viii, verse 3:

> The eternal spirit is the Supreme Brahma. Its condition as *Praṭyagāṭma* is called *Aḍhyāṭma.* Action which leads to incarnated existence is denoted by Karma.

Here the only words used to denote *Parabrahmam* are *Akṣharam* and *Brahma.* These are the words he generally uses. You will notice that he does not in any place call it *Īshvara* or *Maheshvara*; he does not even allude to it often as *Āṭmā.* Even the term *Paramāṭmā* he applies to himself, and not to *Parabrahmam.* I believe that the reason for this is that the word *Āṭmā,* strictly speaking, means the same thing as self, that idea of self being in no way connected with *Parabrahmam.* This idea of self first comes into existence with

the *Logos*, and not before; hence *Parabrahmam* ought not to be called *Paramāṭmā* or any kind of *Āṭmā*. In one place only, Kṛshṇa, speaking of *Parabrahmam*, says that it is *his Āṭmā*. Except in that case he nowhere uses the word *Āṭmā* or *Paramāṭmā* in speaking of *Parabrahmam*. Strictly speaking *Parabrahmam* is the very foundation of the highest self. *Paramāṭmā* is, however, a term also applied to *Parabrahmam* as distinguished from *Praṭyagāṭmā*. When thus applied it is used in a strictly technical sense. Whenever the term *Praṭyagāṭmā* is used, you will find *Paramāṭmā* used as expressing something distinct from it.

It must not be supposed that either the ego, or any idea of self, can be associated with, or be considered as inherent in *Parabrahmam*. Perhaps it may be said that the idea of self is latent in *Parabrahmam*, as everything is latent in it; and, if on that account you connect the idea of self with *Parabrahmam*, you will be quite justified in applying the term *Paramāṭmā* to *Parabrahmam*. But to avoid confusion it is much better to use our words in a clear sense, and to give to each a distinct connotation about which there can be no dispute. Turn now to chapter viii, verse 11:

> I will briefly explain to thee that place (*paḍam*) which those who know the Veḍas describe as indestructible (*aksharam*), which the ascetics, who are free from desire, enter, and which is the desired destination of those who observe Brahmacharyam.

Here we find another word used by Kṛshṇa when speaking of *Parabrahmam.* He calls it his *paḍam—the abode of bliss or Nirvāṇa.* When he calls *Parabrahmam* **his** *paḍam* or abode, he does not mean *vaikuntha loka* or any other kind of *loka*; he speaks of it as his abode, because it is in the bosom of *Parabrahmam* that the *Logos* resides. He refers to *Parabrahmam* as the abode of bliss, wherein resides eternally the *Logos,* manifested or unmanifested. Again turn to chapter viii, verse 21 :

> That which is stated to be unmanifested and immutable is spoken of as the highest condition to be reached. That place from which there is no return for those who reach it is my supreme abode.

Here the same kind of language is used, and the reference is to *Parabrahmam.* When any soul is absorbed into the *Logos,* or reaches the *Logos,* it may be said to have reached *Parabrahmam,* which is the centre of the *Logos*; and, as the *Logos* resides in the bosom of *Parabrahmam,* when the soul reaches the *Logos* it reaches *Parabrahmam* also.

Here you will notice that he again speaks of *Parabrahmam* as his abode.

Turn now to chapter ix, verses 4, 5 and 6 :

> The whole of this Universe is pervaded by me in my unmanifested form (*Avyaktamūrti*). I am thus the support of all the manifested existence, but I am not supported by them. Look at my condition when manifested as *Īshvara* (*Logos*): these phenomenal manifestations are not within me. My *Atmā* (however) is the foundation and

the origin of manifested beings, though it does not exist in combination with them. Conceive that all the manifested beings are within me, just as the atmosphere spreading everywhere is always in space.

In my last lecture I tried to explain the mysterious connection between *Parabrahmam* and *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. *Parabrahmam* is never differentiated. What is differentiated is *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, which is sometimes called *Avyakṭam*, and in other places, *Kūtasṭham*, which means simply the undifferentiated Element. Nevertheless *Parabrahmam* seems to be the one foundation for all physical phenomena, or for all phenomena that are generally referred to *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. After all, any material object is nothing more than a bundle of attributes to us. Either on account of an innate propensity within us, or as a matter of inference, we always suppose that there is a non-ego, which has this bundle of attributes superimposed upon it, and which is the basis of all these attributes. Were it not for this essence, there could be no physical body. But these attributes do not spring from *Parabrahmam* itself, but from *Mūlaprakṛṭi* which is its veil; *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is the veil of *Parabrahmam*. It is not *Parabrahmam* itself, but merely its appearance. It is purely phenomenal. It is no doubt far more persistent than any other kind of objective existence. Being the first mode or manifestation of the only absolute and unconditioned reality, it seems to be the basis of all subsequent manifestations. Speaking of this aspect of *Parabrahmam*, Kṛshṇa says that the

whole cosmos is pervaded by it, which is his *Avyakṭa* form.

Thus he speaks of *Parabrahmam* as his *Avyakṭa-mūrṭi*, because *Parabrahmam* is unknowable, and only becomes knowable when manifesting itself as the *Logos* or *Īshvara*. Here he is trying to indicate that *Parabrahmam* is the *Avyakṭamūrṭi* of the *Logos* as it is the *Āṭmā* of the *Logos*, which is everywhere present, since it is the *Āṭmā* of the universe, and which appears differentiated—when manifested in the shape of the various *Logoi* working in the cosmos, though in itself it is undifferentiated—and which, though the basis of all phenomenal manifestations, does not partake of the *vikārams* of those phenomenal manifestations.

Refer now to chap. xii, verses 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.[1]

Here again, in speaking of *Parabrahmam* in verses 15, 16 and 17, Kṛshṇa is laying down a proposition which I have already explained at length. I need not now go minutely into the meaning of these verses, for you can very easily ascertain them from the commentaries.

Turn to chapter xiv, verse 27:

> I am the image or the seat of the immortal and indestructible Brahma of eternal law and of undisturbed happiness.

Here Kṛshṇa is referring to himself as a manifestation or image of *Parabrahmam*. He says he is

[1] This and some of the other quotations have been omitted on account of their length.—Ed.

the *Praṭiṣhtha* of *Parabrahmam*; he does not call himself *Parabrahmam*, but only its image or manifestation.

The only other passage in which Kṛṣhṇa refers to the same subject is chapter xv, verse 6:

> That is my supreme abode (*ḍhamā*), which neither sun, nor moon, nor fire illumines. Those who enter it do not return.

There again he speaks of *paḍam* and refers to *Parabrahmam* as his abode. I believe that these are all the statements that refer to *Parabrahmam* in this book, and they are sufficient to indicate its position pretty clearly, and to show the nature of its connection with the *Logos*. I shall now proceed to point out the passages in which reference is made to the *Logos* itself.

Strictly speaking, the whole of this book may be called the book of the philosophy of the *Logos*. There is hardly a page which does not, directly or indirectly, refer to it. There are, however, a few important and significant passages to which it is desirable that I should refer you, so that you may see whether what I have said about the nature and functions of the *Logos*, and its connection with humanity and the human soul, is supported by the teachings of this book. Let us turn to chapter iv, and examine the meaning of verses 5 to 11:

> O Arjuna, I and thou have passed through many births. I know all of them, but thou dost not know, O harasser of foes.

Even I, who am unborn, imperishable, the Lord of all beings, controlling my own nature, take birth through the instrumentality of my *māyā*.

O Bharaṭ, whenever there is a decline of *ḍharma* or righteousness and spread of *aḍharma* or unrighteousness, I create myself.

I take birth in every *yuga*, to protect the good, to destroy evil-doers and to re-establish *ḍharma*.

O Arjuna, he who understands truly my divine birth and action, abandoning his body, reaches me, and does not come to birth again.

Many, who are free from passion, fear and anger, devoted to me and full of me, purified by spiritual wisdom, have attained my condition.

This passage refers, of course, not only to the *Logos* in the abstract, but also to Kṛshṇa's own incarnations. It will be noticed that he speaks here as if his *Logos* had already associated itself with several personalities, or human individualities, in former *yugas*; and he says that he remembers all that took place in connection with those incarnations. Of course, since there could be no *karmabanḍham* as far as he was concerned, his *Logos,* when it associated itself with a human soul, would not lose its own independence of action, as a soul confined by the bonds of matter. And because his intellect and wisdom were in no way clouded by this association with a human soul, he says he can recollect all his previous incarnations, while Arjuna, not yet having fully received the light of the *Logos,* is not in a position to understand all that took place

in connection with his former births. He says that it is his object to look after the welfare of humanity, and that whenever a special incarnation is necessary, he unites himself with the soul of a particular individual; and that he appears in various forms for the purpose of establishing *ḍharma*, and of rectifying matters on the plane of human life, if *aḍharma* gets the ascendancy. From the words he uses, there is reason to suppose that the number of his own incarnations has been very great, more so than our books are willing to admit. He apparently refers to human incarnations; if the *janmas* or incarnations referred to are simply the recognised human incarnations of Vishṇu, there would perhaps be only two incarnations before Kṛshṇa, Rāma and Parasurāma, for the *Maṭsya, Kūrma, Varāha* and *Narasimha Avaṭārs* were not, strictly speaking, human incarnations. Even Vāmana was not born of human father or mother.

The mysteries of these incarnations lie deep in the inner sanctuaries of the ancient arcane science, and can only be understood by unveiling certain hidden truths. The human incarnations can, however, be understood by the remarks I have already made. It may be that this *Logos*, which has taken upon itself the care of humanity, has incarnated not merely in connection with two individuals whose history we see narrated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhāraṭa*, but also perhaps in connection with various individuals who have appeared in different parts of the world

and at different times as great reformers and saviours of mankind.

Again, these *janmams* might not only include all the special incarnations which this *Logos* has undergone, but might also perhaps include all the incarnations of that individual, who in the course of his spiritual progress finally joined himself, or united his soul with the *Logos,* which has been figuring as the guardian angel, so to speak, of the best and the highest interests of humanity on this planet.

In this connection there is a great truth that I ought to bring to your notice. Whenever any particular individual reaches the highest state of spiritual culture, develops in himself all the virtues that alone entitle him to a union with the *Logos,* and finally, unites his soul with the *Logos,* there is, as it were, a sort of reaction emanating from that *Logos* for the good of humanity. If I am permitted to use a simile, I may compare it to what may happen in the case of the sun when a comet falls upon it. If a comet falls upon the sun, there is necessarily an accession of heat and light. So in the case of a human being who has developed an unselfish love for humanity in himself. He unites his highest qualities with the *Logos,* and, when the time of the final union comes, generates in it an impulse to incarnate for the good of humanity. Even when it does not actually incarnate, it sends down its influence for the good of mankind. This influence may be

conceived of as invisible spiritual grace that descends from heaven, and it is showered down upon humanity, as it were, whenever any great Mahāṭma unites his soul with the *Logos*. Every Mahāṭma who joins his soul with the *Logos* is thus a source of immense power for the good of humanity in after generations. It is said that the Mahāṭmas, living as they do apart from the world, are utterly useless so far as humanity is concerned when they are still living, and are still more so when they have reached Nirvāṇa. This is an absurd proposition that has been put forward by certain writers who did not comprehend the true nature of Nirvāṇa. The truth is, as I have said, every purified soul joined with the *Logos* is capable of stimulating the energy of the *Logos* in a particular direction. I do not mean to say that in the case of every Mahāṭma there is necessarily any tendency to *incarnate* for the purpose of teaching *ḍharma* to mankind—in special cases this may happen; but in all cases there is an influence of the highest spiritual efficacy coming down from the *Logos* for the good of humanity, whether as an invisible essence, or in the shape of another human incarnation, as in the case of Kṛshṇa, or rather the *Logos* with reference to which we have been speaking of Kṛshṇa. It might be that this *Logos* that seems to have incarnated already on this planet among various nations for the good of humanity, was that into which the soul of a great Mahāṭma of a former *kalpa* was finally absorbed;

that the impulse which was thus communicated to it has been acting, as it were, to make it incarnate and re-incarnate during the present *kalpa* for the good of mankind.

In this connection I must frankly tell you, that beyond the mystery I have indicated there is yet another mystery in connection with Kṛshṇa and all the incarnations mentioned in this book, and that mystery goes to the very root of all occult science. Rather than attempt to give an imperfect explanation, I think it much better to lose sight of this part of the subject, and proceed to explain the teachings of this book, as if Kṛshṇa is not speaking from the standpoint of any particular *Logos*, but from that of the *Logos* in the abstract. So far as the general tenor of this book is concerned, it would suit any other *Logos* as well as that of Kṛshṇa, but there are a few scattered passages, that when explained will be found to possess a special significance with reference to this mystery which they do not possess now. An attempt will be made in *The Secret Doctrine* to indicate the nature of this mystery as far as possible, but it must not be imagined that the veil will be completely drawn, and that the whole mystery will be revealed. Only hints will be given by the help of which you will have to examine and understand the subject. This matter is, however, foreign to my subject; yet I have thought it better to bring the fact to your notice lest you should be misled. The whole philosophy of this book

is the philosophy of the *Logos*. In general, Christ or Buḍḍha might have used the same words as those of Kṛshṇa; and what I have said about this mystery only refers to some particular passages that seem to touch upon the nature of Kṛshṇa's divine individuality. He himself seems to think there is a mystery, as you may see from the ninth verse.

In the tenth verse *Maḍbhāva* means the condition of the *Logos*. Kṛshṇa says there have been several Mahāṭmas who have become *Īṣhvaras*, or have united their souls completely with the *Logos*.

Turn now to chapter v, verses 14 and 15:

> The Lord of the world does not bring about or create karma or the condition by which people attribute karma to themselves; nor does he make people feel the effects of their karma. It is the law of natural causation that works. He does not take upon himself the sin or the merit of anyone. Real knowledge is smothered by delusion, and hence created beings are misled.

Here he says that *Īṣhvara* does not create karma, nor does he create in individuals any desire to do karma. All karma, or impulse to do karma, emanates from *Mūlaprakṛṭi* and its *vikārams*, and not from the *Logos* or the light that emanates from the *Logos*. You must look upon this light or *Fohat*, as a kind of energy eternally beneficent in its nature, as stated in *The Idyll of the White Lotus*. In itself it is not capable of generating any tendencies that lead to *banḍham*; but *ahaṅkāra*, and the desire to do karma, and all karma with its various consequences come

into existence by reason of the *upāḍhis* which are but the manifestations of that one *Mūlaprakṛṭi.*

Strictly and logically speaking, you will have to attribute these results to both of these forces. *Mūlaprakṛṭi* will not act, and is incapable of producing any result, unless energised by the light of the *Logos.* Nevertheless, most of the results that pertain to karma and the continued existence of man as the responsible producer of karma are traceable to *Mūlaprakṛṭi,* and not to the light that vitalises it. We may therefore suppose that this *Mūlaprakṛṭi* is the real or principal *banḍhakāraṇam,* and this light is the one instrument by which we may attain to union with the *Logos,* which is the source of salvation. This light is the foundation of the better side of human nature, and of all those tendencies of action, which generally lead to liberation from the bonds of *aviḍyā.*

Turn to chapter vii, verses 4 and 5 :

> My *Prakṛṭi* (*Mulaprakṛṭi*) is divided into eight parts —earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intuition and egotism. This *prakṛṭi* is called *Aparāprakṛṭi.* Understand my *Parāprakṛṭi* (*Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*),as something distinct from this. This *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* is the one life by which the whole Universe is supported.

Kṛṣhṇa in verse 5 distinguishes between this *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* and *prakṛṭi.* This *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* is, strictly speaking, the *Mahāchaiṭanyam* of the whole cosmos, the one energy, or the only force from which spring all force manifestations. He says you must look upon

it as something different from the *prakṛṭi* of the Sāṅkhyas.

Turn now to chapter vii, verse 7:

> O Ḍhanañjaya, there is nothing superior to me, and all this hangs on me as a row of gems on the string running through them.

Please notice that in verses 4 and 5 Kṛṣhṇa is referring to two kinds of *Prakṛṭi*. Of course that *Prakṛṭi*, which is differentiated into the eight elements enumerated in Sāṅkhya philosophy is the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas—it is the *Mūlāprakṛṭi* which must not be confounded with the *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, which is the light of the *Logos*. Conceive *Mūlaprakṛṭi* as *aviḍyā*, and *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, the light of the *Logos*, as *viḍyā*. These words have other meanings also. In the *Sveṭāshvaṭara Upaniṣhaṭ*, *Īṣhvara* is described as the deity who controls both *viḍyā* and *aviḍyā*.

Here Kṛṣhṇa seems to refer to all the qualities, or all the excellent qualities, manifested in every region of phenomenal existence, as springing from himself.

No doubt the other qualities also, or rather their ideal forms, originally spring from him, but they ought to be traced mainly to *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, and not himself.

I will now refer you to verse 24 and the following verses of the same chapter:

> The ignorant, who do not know my supreme and indestructible and best nature regard me as a manifestation of *avyakṭam*.
>
> Veiled by my *yoga-māyā* I am not visible to all. The deluded world does not comprehend me who am unborn and imperishable.

I know, O Arjuna, all beings, past, present and future, but none knows me.

In these verses Kṛshṇa is controverting a doctrine that has unfortunately created a good deal of confusion. I have already told you that the Sāṅkhyas have taken their *Avyakṭam,* or rather *Parabrahmam* veiled by *Mūlaprakṛṭi,* as *Āṭmā* or the real self. Their opinion was that this *avyakṭam* took on a kind of phenomenal differentiation on account of association with its *upāḍhi,* and when this phenomenal differentiation took place, the *avyakṭam* became the *Āṭmā* of the individual. They have thus altogether lost sight of the *Logos.* Startling consequences followed from this doctrine. They thought that there being but one *avyakṭam,* one soul, or one spirit, that existed, in every *upāḍhi,* appearing differentiated, though not differentiated in reality, if somehow we could control the action of the *upāḍhi,* and destroy the *māyā* it had created, the result would be the complete extinction of man's self and a final *layam* in this *avyakṭam, Parabrahmam.* It is this doctrine that has spoilt the Aḍwaiṭa philosophy of this country, that has brought the Buḍḍhism of Ceylon, Burma and China to its present deplorable condition, and led so many Veḍānṭic writers to say that Nirvāṇa was in reality a condition of perfect *layam* or annihilation.

If those who say that Nirvāṇa is annihilation are right, then, so far as the individuality of the soul is concerned, it is completely annihilated, and what

exists ultimately is not the soul, nor the individual, however purified or exalted, but the one *Parabrahmam*, which has all along been existing, and that *Parabrahmam* itself is a sort of unknowable essence which has no idea of self, nor even an individual existence, but which is the one power, the one mysterious basis of the whole cosmos. In interpreting the *Praṇava*, the Sāṅkyas made the *arḍhamāṭra* really mean this *avyakṭam* and nothing more. In some *Upanishaṭs* this *arḍhamāṭra* is described as that which, appearing differentiated, is the soul of man. When this differentiation, which is mainly due to the *upāḍhi*, is destroyed, there is a *layam* of *Āṭmā* in *Parabrahmam*. This is also the view of a considerable number of persons in India, who called themselves Aḍwaiṭis. It is also the view put forward as the correct Veḍānṭic view. It was certainly the view of the ancient Sāṅkhyan philosophers, and is the view of all those Buḍḍhists who consider Nirvāṇa to be the *layam* of the soul in *Parabrahmam*.

After reaching *kāraṇa sharīra* there are two paths, both of which lead to *Parabrahmam*. *Kāraṇa sharīra*, you must know, is an *upāḍhi*; it is material, that is to say, it is derived from *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, but there is also acting in it, as its light and energy, the light from the *Logos*, or *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* or *Fohat*. Now, as I have said, there are two paths. When you reach *kāraṇa sharīra* you can either confine your

attention to the *upāḍhi* and, tracing its genealogy up to *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, arrive at *Parabrahmam* at the next step, or you may lose sight of the *upāḍhi*, altogether, and fix your attention solely upon the energy, or light, or life, that is working within it. You may then try to trace its origin, travelling along the ray till you reach its source, which is the *Logos* and from the standpoint of the *Logos* try to reach *Parabrahmam.*

Of these two paths a considerable number of modern Veḍānṭists, and all Sāṅkhyas and all Buḍḍhists—except those who are acquainted with the occult doctrine—have chosen the one that leads to *Mūlaprakṛṭi,* hoping thus to reach *Parabrahmam* ultimately. But in the view taken by these philosophers the *Logos* and its light were completely lost sight of. *Āṭmā,* in their opinion, is the differentiated appearance of this *avyakṭam* and nothing more.

Now what is the result ? The differentiated appearance ceases when the *upāḍhi* ceases to exist, and the thing that existed before exists afterwards, and that thing is *avyakṭam,* and beyond it there is *Parabrahmam.* The individuality of man is completely annihilated. Further, in such a case, it would be simply absurd to speak of *Avaṭāras,* for they would then be impossible and out of the question. How is it possible for Mahāṭmas, or adepts, to help mankind in any possible way when once they have reached this stage ? The Sinhalese Buḍḍhists have pushed this doctrine to

its logical conclusion. According to them Buḍḍha is extinguished, and every man who follows his doctrine will eventually lose the individuality of his *Āṭmā*; therefore they say that the Tibetans are entirely mistaken in thinking that Buḍḍha has been overshadowing, or can overshadow any mortals; since the time he reached *Paraṇirvāṇa* the soul of the man who was called Buḍḍha has lost its individuality. Now I say that Kṛshṇa protests against the doctrine which leads to such consequences.

He says (verse 24) that such a view is wrong, and that those who hold it do not understand his real position as the *Logos* or *Verbum*. Moreover he tells us the reason why he is thus lost sight of. He says it is so because he is always veiled by his *yoga-māyā*.

This *yoga-māyā* is his light. It is supposed that this light alone is visible, the centre from which it radiates remaining always invisible.

As may naturally be expected this light is always seen mixed up, or in conjunction, with the Emanations of *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. Hence Sāṅkhyas have considered it to be an aspect of, or an Emanation from, *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. *Avyakṭam* was in their opinion the source, not only of matter, but of force also.

But according to Kṛshṇa this light is not to be traced to *avyakṭam*, but to a different source altogether, which source is himself. But, as this source is altogether *arūpa* and mysterious and cannot be easily detected, it was supposed by these philosophers

that there was nothing more in and behind this light, except their *avyakṭam*, its basis. But this light is the veil of the *Logos* in the sense that the Shekinah of the Kabbalists is supposed to be the veil of Adonai. Verily it is the Holy Ghost that seems to form the flesh and blood of the divine Christ. If the *Logos* were to manifest Itself, even to the highest spiritual perception of a human being, It would only be able to do so clothed in this light which forms its body. See what Shaṅkarāchārya says in his *Soundaryalahari*. Addressing the light he says: "You are the body of Shambhu." The light is, as it were, a cloak, or a mask, with which the *Logos* is enabled to make Its appearance.

The real centre of the light is not visible even to the highest spiritual perception of man. It is this truth which is briefly expressed in that priceless little book *Light on the Path*, when it says (Rule 12): "It is beyond you; because when you reach it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable because it for ever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame."

You will bear in mind the distinction that Kṛshṇa draws between the unfortunate doctrine of the Sāṅkhyas and others, and the true theory which he is endeavouring to inculcate, because it leads to important consequences. Even now I may say that ninety per cent of the Vedāntic writers hold the view which Kṛshṇa is trying to combat.

Turn now to chapter viii, and examine the meaning of verses 5 to 16.

In these passages Kṛshṇa lays down two propositions which are of immense importance to humanity. First, he says that the soul can reach and become finally assimilated with himself. Next, he says, that when once he is reached there is no more *punarjanmam*, or rebirth, for the man who has succeeded in reaching him.

Against the latter proposition some objections have sometimes been raised. It is said that if the soul reaches the *Logos* and the spiritual individuality of the *Logos* is preserved, and yet if the *Logos* has also to overshadow mortals from time to time, or have any connection with a human being living on earth, then the statement that a man who reaches the *Logos* will have no *punarjanmam* is untrue. But this objection arises from a misunderstanding as to the nature of this union with the *Logos*. As far as we know, judging from our ordinary experience, this individuality, this sense of Ego, which we have at present, is a kind of fleeting entity changing from time to time. Day after day the different experiences of man are being stored up and, in a mysterious manner, united into a single individuality. Of course it seems to every man that he has a definite individuality during the course of a particular incarnation, but the individuality of his *kāraṇa sharīra* is made up of several individualities like these. It

must not be imagined that all the experiences that are connected with the various incarnations and go to constitute their respective personalities are to be found in a kind of mechanical juxtaposition in the *kāraṇa sharīra.* It is not so. Nature has a sort of machinery by which it is able to reduce all these bundles of experiences into a single self. Great as is this higher individuality of the human monad, there is an individuality over and above this and far greater than it is. The *Logos* has an individuality of Its own. When the soul rises to the *Logos,* all that this latter takes from the soul is that portion of the soul's individuality which is high and spiritual enough to live in the individuality of the *Logos* ; just as the *kāraṇa sharīra* makes a choice between the various experiences of a man, and only assimilates such portions thereof as belong to its own nature, the *Logos,* when It unites Itself with the soul of a man, only takes from it that which is not repugnant to its nature.

But now see what changes take place in the consciousness of the human being himself. The moment this union takes place, the individual at once feels that he is himself the *Logos,* the monad formed from whose light has been going through all the experiences which he has now added to his individuality. In fact his own individuality is lost, and he becomes endowed with the original individuality of the *Logos.* From the standpoint of the *Logos* the case stands thus: The *Logos* throws

out a kind of feeler, as it were, of Its own light into various organisms. This light vibrates along a series of incarnations and whenever it produces spiritual tendencies, resulting in experience that is capable of being added to the individuality of the *Logos*, the *Logos* assimilates that experience. Thus the individuality of the man becomes the individuality of the *Logos* and the human being united to the *Logos* thinks that this is one of the innumerable spiritual individualities that he has assimilated and united in himself, that self being composed of the experiences which the *Logos* has accumulated, perhaps from the beginning of time. That individual will therefore never return to be born again on earth. Of course if the *Logos* feels that It is born, whenever a new individual makes his appearance having Its light in him, then the individual who has become assimilated with the *Logos* may, no doubt, be said to have *punarjanmam.* But the *Logos* does not suffer because Its light is never contaminated by the *Vikārams* of *Prakṛti.* Kṛshṇa points out that he is simply *Upaḍrāṣhṭā*, a witness, not personally interested in the result at all, except when a certain amount of spirituality is generated and the Mahāṭma is sufficiently purified to assimilate his soul with the *Logos.* Up to that time he says: "I have no personal concern, because I simply watch as a disinterested witness. Because my light appears in different organisms, I do not therefore suffer the pains and sorrows that a man may have to bear. My spiritual

nature is in no way contaminated by the appearance of my light in various organisms." One might just as well say that the sun is defiled or rendered impure, because its light shines in impure places. In like manner it cannot be true to say that the *Logos* suffers. Therefore it is not the real self that feels pleasure or pain, and when a man assimilates his soul with the *Logos*, he no longer suffers either the pains or pleasures of human life.

Again when I speak of the light of the *Logos* permeating this cosmos and vibrating in various incarnations, it does not necessarily follow that a being who has gone to the *Logos* is incarnated again. He has then a well defined spiritual individuality of his own, and though the *Logos* is *Īṣhvara*, and Its light is the *Chaiṭanyam* of the universe, and though the *Logos* from time to time assimilates with Its own spiritual nature the purified souls of various Mahāṭmas, and also overshadows certain individuals, still the *Logos* Itself never suffers and has nothing like *punarjanmam* in the proper sense of the word ; and a man who is absorbed into It becomes an immortal spiritual being, a real *Īṣhvara* in the cosmos, never to be reborn, and never again to be subject to the pains and pleasures of human life.

It is only in this sense that you have to understand immortality. If unfortunately immortality is understood in the sense in which it is explained by the modern Veḍānṭic writers and by the Sinhalese Buḍḍhists, it

does not appear to be a very desirable object for man's aspirations. If it be true, as these teach, that the individuality of man, instead of being ennobled and preserved and developed into a spiritual power, is destroyed and annihilated, then the word immortality becomes a meaningless term.

I think I have the complete authority of Kṛṣhṇa for saying that this theory is correct, and this I believe to be, though all may not agree with me on this point, a correct statement of the doctrine of Shaṅkarāchārya and Buḍḍha.

Turn now to chapter ix, verse 11:

> The deluded, not knowing my supreme nature, despise me, the Lord (*Īṣhvara*) of all beings, when dwelling in a human body.

Here Kṛṣhṇa calls himself the real *Īṣhvara.* Again in verse 13:

> The Mahāṭmas devoted to *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, and knowing me as the imperishable cause of all beings, worship me with their minds concentrated on me.

Here he refers to *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, between which and *Mūlaprakṛṭi* he draws a clear distinction. By some however this *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* is looked upon as a thing to be shunned, a force that must be controlled. It is on the other hand a beneficent energy, by taking advantage of which a man may reach its centre and its source.

See verse 18 of the same chapter:

> I am the refuge, the protector, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the shelter, the friend, the source, the destruction, the place, the receptacle, the imperishable seed.

All these epithets applied by Kṛshṇa to himself, show that he is speaking of himself in the same manner as Christ spoke of himself, or as every great teacher, who was supposed to have represented the *Logos* for the time being on this planet, spoke of himself.

Another very significant passage is verse 22 of the same chapter:

I take interest in the welfare of those men, who worship me, and think of me alone, with their attention always fixed on me.

I have told you that in the generality of cases Kṛshṇa, or the *Logos*, would simply be a disinterested witness, watching the career of the human monad, and not concerning Itself with its interests. But, in cases where real spiritual progress is made, the way is prepared for a final connection with the *Logos*. It commences in this manner: the *Logos* begins to take a greater interest in the welfare of the individual, and becomes his light and his guide, and watches over him, and protects him. This is the way in which the approach of the *Logos* to the human soul commences. This interest increases more and more, till, when the man reaches the highest spiritual development, the *Logos* enters into him, and then, instead of finding within himself merely the reflection of the *Logos*, he finds the *Logos* Itself. Then the final union takes place, after which there is no more incarnation for the man. It is only in such

a case that the *Logos* becomes more than a disinterested spectator.

I must here call your attention to verse 29 and the following verses at the end of this chapter:

> I am the same to all beings, I have neither friend nor foe; those who worship me with devotion are in me, and I in them.
>
> Even if he whose conduct is wicked worships me alone, he is to be regarded as a good man, for he is working in the right direction.
>
> O son of Kunṭī, he soon becomes a virtuous person, and obtains eternal peace; rest assured that my worshipper does not perish.
>
> Those who are born in sin and are devoted to me, whether women, or Vaishyas, or Shūḍras, reach my supreme abode.
>
> How much more holy Brāhmaṇas and devoted Rājarṣhis; having come into this transient and miserable world, worship me!
>
> Fix thy mind on me, worship me, bow down to me: those who depend on me, and are devoted to me, reach me.

Here Kṛṣhṇa shows, by the two propositions that he is laying down, that he is speaking from a thoroughly cosmopolitan standpoint. He says: "No one is my friend: no one is my enemy." He has already pointed out the best way of gaining his friendship. He does not assume that any particular man is his enemy or his friend. We know that, even in the case of *rākṣhasas,* Prahlāḍa became the greatest of *bhāgavaṭas.* Kṛṣhṇa is thoroughly impartial in dealing with mankind and in his spiritual ministration. He says it does

not matter in the least to him what kind of *āsramam* a man may have, what kind of ritual or formula of faith he professes; and he further says, that he does not make any distinction between *Shūdras* and *Brāhmaṇas*, between men and women, between higher and lower classes. His help is extended to all; there is but one way of reaching him; and that way may be utilised by anybody. In this respect he draws a distinction between the doctrines of the *karmayogīs* and his own teaching. Some people say that certain privileged classes only are entitled to attain Nirvāṇa. He says this is not the case. Moreover he must be taken to reject by implication the doctrine of certain Maḍhwas, who say that all souls can be divided into three divisions. They say that there is a certain class of people called *niṭyanārakikas*, who are destined, whatever they may do, to go down to bottomless perdition; another class of people called *niṭyasaṃsārikas*, who can never leave the plane of earth; and a third class, the *niṭyamukṭas*, who, whatever mischievous things they do, must be admitted into *vaikuntham*. This doctrine is not sanctioned by Kṛshṇa. His doctrine further contains a protest against the manner in which certain writers have misrepresented the importance of Buḍḍha *Avaṭār*. No doubt some of our Brāhmaṇa writers admit that Buḍḍha was an *Avaṭār* of Vishṇu; but they say it was an *Avaṭār* undertaken for mischievous purposes. He came here to teach people all sorts of absurd doctrines, in order to bring about

their damnation. These people had to be punished; and he thought the best way to bring about their punishment was to make them mad by preaching false doctrines to them. This view, I am ashamed to say, is solemnly put forward in some of our books. How different this is from what Kṛṣhṇa teaches. He says: "In my sight all men are the same; and if I draw any distinction at all, it is only when a man reaches a very high state of spiritual perfection and looks upon me as his guide and protector. Then, and then only, I cease to be a disinterested witness, and try to interest myself in his affairs. In every other case I am simply a disinterested witness." He takes no account of the fact that this man is a Brāhmaṇa and that one a Buḍḍhist or a Pārsī; but he says that in his eyes all mankind stand on the same level, that what distinguishes one from another is spiritual light and life.

> He who is sensible enough amongst men to know me, the unborn Lord of the world who has no beginning, is freed from all sins.

Now turn to the third verse of the next chapter (chapter x):

Here he calls himself the unborn: he had no beginning: he is the *Īṣhvara* of the cosmos. It must not be supposed that the *Logos* perishes or is destroyed even at the time of cosmic *pralaya*. Of course it is open to question whether there is such a thing as cosmic *pralaya*. We can very well conceive

a solar *pralaya* as probable, we can also conceive that there may be a time when activity ceases throughout the whole cosmos, but there is some difficulty in arguing by analogy from a definite and limited system to an indefinite and infinite one. At any rate, among occultists there is a belief that there will be such a cosmic *pralaya*, though it may not take place for a number of years that it is impossible for us even to imagine. But even though there may be a cosmic *pralaya* the *Logos* will not perish even when it takes place; otherwise at the recommencement of cosmic activity, the *Logos* will have to be born again, as the present *Logos* came into existence at the time when the present cosmic evolution commenced. In such a case, Kṛshṇa cannot call himself *aja* (unborn); he can only say this of himself, if the *Logos* does not perish at the time of cosmic *pralaya*, but sleeps in the bosom of *Parabrahmam*, and starts into wakefulness when the next day of cosmic activity commences.

I have already said in speaking of this *Logos*, that it was quite possible that it was the *Logos* that appeared in the shape of the first Ḍhyān Chohan, or Planetary Spirit, when the evolution of man recommenced after the last period of inactivity on this planet, as stated in Mr. Sinnett's book, *Esoteric Buḍḍhism*; and after having set the evolutionary current in motion, retired to the spiritual plane congenial to its own nature, and has been watching since over the interests of humanity, now and then

appearing in connection with a human individuality for the good of mankind. Or you may look upon the *Logos* represented by Kṛshṇa as one belonging to the same *class* as the *Logos* which so appeared. In speaking of himself Kṛshṇa says, (chapter x, verse 6):

> The seven great Ṛshis, the four preceding Manus, partaking of my nature, were born from my mind, from them sprang (was born) the human race and the world.

He speaks of the *sapṭa ṛshis* and of the Manus as his *mānasapuṭras* or mind-born sons, which they would be if he was the so-called Prajāpaṭi, who appeared on this planet and commenced the work of evolution.

In all Purāṇas the Maharshis are said to be the mind-born sons of Prajāpaṭi or Brahmā, who was the first manifested being on this planet, and who was called *Swayambhu*, as he had neither father nor mother; he commenced the creation of man by forming, or bringing into existence by his own intellectual power, these Maharshis and these Manus. After this was accomplished Prajāpaṭi disappeared from the scene; as stated in *Manusmṛṭi*, *Swayambhu* thus disappeared after commencing the work of evolution. He has not, however, yet disconnected himself altogether from the group of humanity that has commenced to evolute on this planet, but is still the overshadowing *Logos* or the manifested *Īṣhvara*, who does interest himself in the affairs of this

planet and is in a position to incarnate as an *Avaṭār* for the good of its population.

There is a peculiarity in this passage to which I must call your attention. He speaks here of four Manus. Why does he speak of four? We are now in the seventh *Manvanṭara*—that of Vaivasvaṭa. If he is speaking of the past Manus, he ought to speak of six, but he only mentions four. In some commentaries an attempt has been made to interpret this in a peculiar manner.

The word 'Chaṭvāraha' is separated from the word 'Manavaha' and is made to refer to Sanaka, Sananḍana, Sanaṭkumāra and Sanaṭsujāṭa, who were also included among the mind-born sons of Prajāpaṭi.

But this interpretation will lead to a most absurd conclusion, and make the sentence contradict itself. The persons alluded to in the text have a qualifying clause in the sentence. It is well known that Sanaka and the other three refused to create, though the other sons had consented to do so; therefore, in speaking of those persons from whom humanity has sprung into existence, it would be absurd to include these four also in the list. The passage must be interpreted without splitting the compound into two nouns. The number of Manus will be then four, and the statement would contradict the Purāṇic account, though it would be in harmony with the occult theory. You will recollect that Mr. Sinnett has stated that we are now in the fifth root race

Each root race is considered as the *santaṭi* of a particular Manu. Now the fourth root race has passed, or in other words there have been four past Manus. There is another point to be considered in connection with this subject. It is stated in *Manusmṛṭi* that the first Manu (Svayambhuva) created seven Manus. This seems to be the total number of Manus according to this Smṛṭi. It is not alleged that there was, or would be another batch of Manus created, or to be created at some other time.

But the Purāṇic account makes the number of Manus fourteen. This is a subject which, I believe, requires a considerable amount of attention at your hands; it is no doubt a very interesting one, and I request such of you as have the required time at your disposal, to try and find out how this confusion has arisen. The commentators try to get the number fourteen out of Manu. Of course an ingenious paṇdiṭ can get anything out of anything, but if you will go into the matter deeply, it is quite possible we may be able to find out how the whole mistake has arisen, and if there is any mistake or not. Any further discussion of the subject at present is unnecessary.

Another interesting function of the *Logos* is indicated in the same chapter, verse 11:

I, dwelling in them, out of my compassion for them, destroy the darkness born from ignorance by the shining light of spiritual Wisdom.

Here he is said to be not only an instrument of salvation, but also the source of wisdom. As I have already said, the light that emanates from him has three phases, or three aspects. First it is the life, or the *Mahāchaiṭanyam* of the cosmos; that is one aspect of it; secondly, it is force, and in this aspect it is the *Fohat* of the Buḍḍhist philosophy; lastly it is wisdom, in the sense that it is the *Chichhakṭi* of the Hinḍū philosophers. All these three aspects are, as you may easily see, combined in our conception of the *Gāyaṭrī.* It is stated to be *Chichhakṭi* by Vasiṣhtha, and its meaning justifies the statement. It is further represented as light, and in the *saṅkalpam* that precedes the *japam* it is evoked as the life of the whole cosmos. If you will read carefully the *Idyll of the White Lotus,* you will perhaps gain some further ideas about the functions of this light, and the help it is capable of giving to humanity.

I have now to call your attention to all those verses in chapter x, that refer to his so-called *vibhūṭi,* or excellence.

He says *Aham Aṭmā* (I am self), because every self is but a manifestation of himself, or a reflection of the *Logos,* as I have already indicated. It is in that sense he is the *Aham* (I) manifested everywhere in every *upāḍhi.* When he says this, he is speaking from the standpoint of the *Logos* in the abstract, and not from that of any particular *Logos.* The ḍescription of this *vibhūṭi* conveys to our minds an

important lesson. All that is good and great, sublime and noble in this phenomenal universe, or even in the other *lokas*, proceeds from the *Logos*, and is in some way or other the manifestation of Its wisdom and power and *vibhūṭi*; and all that tends to spiritual degradation and to objective physical life emanates from *prakṛṭi*. In fact there are two contending forces in the cosmos. The one is this *prakṛṭi* whose genealogy we have already traced. The other is the *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi*, the light that comes down, reflection after reflection, to the plane of the lowest organisms. In all those religions in which the fight between the good and the bad impulses of this cosmos is spoken of, the real reference is always to this light, which is constantly attempting to raise men from the lowest level to the highest plane of spiritual life, and that other force, which has its place in *prakṛṭi*, and is constantly leading the spirit into material existence. This conception seems to be the foundation of all those wars in heaven, and of all the fighting between good and bad principles in the cosmos, which we meet with in so many religious systems of philosophy. Kṛṣhṇa points out that everything that is considered great or good or noble should be considered as having in it his energy, wisdom and light. This is certainly true, because the *Logos* is the one source of energy, wisdom and spiritual enlightenment. When you realise what an important place this energy that emanates from

the *Logos* plays in the evolution of the whole cosmos, and examine its powers with reference to the spiritual enlightenment which it is capable of generating, you will see that this description of his *vibhūṭi* is by no means an exaggerated account of Kṛshṇa's importance in the cosmos.

Turn next to chapter xi.

The inferences I mean to draw from this chapter are these: First, that the *Logos* reflects the whole cosmos in Itself, or, in other words, that the whole cosmos exists in the *Logos* in Its germ. As I have already said, the world is the word made manifest, and the *Logos* is, in the mystical phraseology of our ancient writers, the *pashyanṭī* form of this word. This is the germ in which the whole plan of the solar system eternally exists. The image existing in the *Logos* becomes expanded and amplified when communicated to Its light, and is manifested in matter when the light acts upon *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. No impulse, no energy, no form in the cosmos can ever come into existence without having its original conception in the field of *Chiṭ*, which constitutes the demiurgic mind of the *Logos*.

The *Logos*, Its light and *Mūlaprakṛṭi* constitute the real *Taṭvaṭrayam* of the Visishatāḍvaiṭis, *Mūlaprakṛṭi* being their *Achiṭ*, the light from the *Logos* their *Chiṭ*, and the *Logos* being the *Īṣhvara*.

There is yet another way of looking at these entities with which you ought to familiarise yourselves;

The whole cosmos, by which I mean all the innumerable solar systems, may be called the physical body of the one *Parabrahmam*; the whole of this light or force may be called its *sūkṣhma sharīra*; the abstract *Logos* will then be the *kāraṇa sharīra,* while the *Āṭmā* will be *Parabrahmam* itself.

But this classification must not be confused with that other classification which relates to the subdivisions of one only of these entities, the manifested solar system, the most objective of these entities, which I have called the *sṭhūla sharīra* of *Parabrahmam.* This entity is in itself divisible into four planes of existence, that correspond to the four *māṭras* in *prāṇa,* as generally described. Again this light which is the *sūkṣhma sharīra* of *Parabrahmam* must not be confounded with the astral light. The astral light is simply the *sūkṣhma* form of *Vaishvānara*; but so far as this light is concerned, all the manifested planes in the solar system are objective to it, and so it cannot be the astral light. I find it necessary to draw this distinction, because the two have been confounded in certain writings. What I have said will explain to some extent why the *Logos* is considered as having *vishvarūpam.*

Again, if the *Logos* is nothing more than an *Achiḍrūpam,* how is it that Arjuna, with his spiritual intelligence, sees an objective image or form before him, which, however splendid and magnificent, is, strictly speaking, an external image of the world?

What is seen by him is not the *Logos* Itself but the *Vishvarūpa* form of the *Logos* as manifested in its light—*Ḍaivīprakṛṭi.* It is only when thus manifested that the *Logos* can become visible even to the highest spiritual intelligence of man.

There is yet another inference to be drawn from this chapter. Truly the form shown to Arjuna was fearful to look at, and all the terrible things about to happen in the war appeared to him depicted in it. The *Logos* being the universe in idea, coming events (or those about to manifest themselves on the objective plane) are generally manifested long, it may be, before they actually happen, in the plane of the *Logos* from which all impulses spring originally. Bhīṣhma, Ḍroṇa and Karṇa were still living at the time Kṛṣhṇa showed this form. But yet their deaths and the destruction of almost their whole army seemed to be foreshadowed in this appearance of the *Logos.* Its terrible form was but an indication of the terrible things that were going to happen. In itself the *Logos* has no form; clothed in its light It assumes a form which is, as it were, a symbol of the impulses operating, or about to operate, in the cosmos at the time of the manifestation.

LECTURE IV

The subject of these lectures is a very vast and complicated one. I have endeavoured to compress the substance of my lectures within the required limits, expecting to go through the whole discourse in three days, but my calculations have failed, and I have hardly finished even the introduction. These lectures must necessarily remain imperfect, and all I could do in them was to lay before you a few suggestions upon which you should meditate.

A good deal will depend on your own exertions. The subject is very difficult; it ramifies into various departments of science, and the truth I have been putting forward will not be easily grasped, and I might not even have succeeded in conveying my exact meaning to your minds. Moreover, as I have not given reasons for every one of my propositions, and have not cited authorities in support of my statements, some of them might appear strange.

I am afraid that before you can grasp my real ideas, you will have to study all the existing commentaries on the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*, as well as the original itself, according to your own light, and see besides this to what conclusions the speculations of

the western scientists and philosophers are gradually leading. You will then have to judge for yourselves whether the hypothesis which I have attempted to place before you is a reasonable one or not.

In my last lecture I stopped at the eleventh chapter of the book.

In that lecture I pointed out the various passages relating to the *Logos*, which I thought would support and justify the assertions I made in my preliminary lecture about its nature and its relation to mankind. I shall now proceed to point out the passages to which it is desirable to call your attention in the succeeding chapters.

In chapter xii, to which I shall have to refer again in another connection, I have to ask your attention to the passages with which it commences. There Kṛshṇa points out the distinction between meditating and concentrating one's attention upon the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas and fixing the mind and relying upon the *Logos*.

I have already shown in what important respects the Sāṅkhya philosophy differed from the Vedānṭic system of Kṛshṇa. Kṛshṇa has stated in various places, that their *avyakṭam* was different from his *Parabrahmam*—that he was by no means to be considered a manifestation of that *avyakṭam*—and now he tells Arjuna in this chapter that those who try to follow the Sāṅkhya philosophy and endeavour

to reach that *avyakṭam* by their own methods, are placed in a far more difficult position than those whose object is to search for and find out the *Logos*.

This must naturally be so, and for this reason. This *avyakṭam* is nothing more than *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. The Sāṅkhyas thought that their *avyakṭam* was the basis of the differentiated *Prakṛṭi* with all its *guṇas*, this differentiated *Prakṛṭi* being represented by the three principles into which I have divided the solar system. In case you follow the Sāṅkhyan doctrine, you have to rise from *upāḍhi* to *upāḍhi* in gradual succession, and when you try to rise from the last *upādhi* to their *avyakṭam*, there is unfortunately no connection that is likely to enable your consciousness to bridge the interval. If the Sāṅkhyan system of philosophy is the true one, your aim will be to trace *upāḍhi* to its source, but not consciousness to its source. The consciousness manifested in every *upāḍhi* is traceable to the *Logos* and not to the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas. It is very much easier for a man to follow his own consciousness farther and farther into the depths of his own inmost nature, and ultimately reach its source—the *Logos*—than to try to follow *upāḍhi* to its source in the *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, the *avyakṭam*. Moreover, supposing you do succeed in reaching this *avyakṭam*, you can never fix your thoughts in it or preserve your individuality in it; for, it is incapable of retaining any of these permanently. It may be that to reach it means to take

objective cognisance of it, but even that you cannot do from the standpoint of *kāraṇa sharīra*. You have to rise to a still higher level before you can look upon *Mūlaprakṛṭi* as an object. Thus, considering *avyakṭam* as an object of perception you cannot reach it until you reach the *Logos*. You cannot transfer your individuality to it, for the simple reason that this individuality derives its source from a quarter altogether different from the *Mūlaprakṛṭi* or the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas, and this *avyakṭam* in itself has no individuality, and does not generate by itself anything like an individuality, it is impossible that anybody's sense of ego can be transferred to and preserved permanently in it.

What, then do the efforts of all those who try to follow the Sāṅkhyan doctrine end in? Kṛshṇa says, that after arriving at the plane of *kāraṇa sharīra*, "they will come to him," finding it impossible otherwise to reach this *avyakṭam* for the reasons indicated above. So when Arjuna asks whether *avyakṭam* or the *Logos* is to be the goal, Kṛshṇa says that the latter must be looked upon as the ultimate destination, because those who try to follow the line indicated by the Sāṅkhyas have tremendous difficulties to contend with. If anything is gained at all by following this latter course, it is that end which is also to be gained by following his path, by making him the object of meditation, and looking upon him as the ultimate goal.

Read chapter xii, verses 3, 4, and 5 in this connection:

Those who are kind and charitable towards all creatures, and who, with a properly balanced mind and with senses under control, meditate on the imperishable and undefinable *avyakṭam*, which is all-pervading, unthinkable, undifferentiated and unchangeable, reach me alone. But the difficulty of those who fix their minds on *avyakṭam* is great. The path towards *avyakṭam* is travelled by embodied souls under very great difficulties.

This description refers to the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas.

In chapter xiii we find the following in the first four verses:

O son of Kunṭī, this body is called *Kṣheṭra* (*upāḍhi* or vehicle). That which knows this *Kṣheṭra* the wise call *Kṣheṭrajña* (the real self or Ego).

Know also that I am the *Kṣheṭrajña* in all *Kṣheṭras*; the knowledge of *Kṣheṭra* and *Kṣheṭrajña* I consider to be real knowledge.

Hear me. I shall state to you briefly what that *Kṣheṭram* is, what its attributes are, what qualities it generates, its source and the reason of its existence; and further who that *Kṣheṭrajña* is, and what powers he possesses. Ṛṣhis have described them in various ways. Different accounts of them are to be found in different Veḍas; and they are also spoken of by the Brahmasūṭras, which are logical and definite.

Here he speaks of *kṣheṭram* and *kṣheṭrajña*. *Kṣheṭram* means nothing more than *upāḍhi* or vehicle, and *Kṣheṭrajña* is the Ego in all its forms and manifestations. *Kṣheṭram* springs from this *avyakṭam* or *Mūlaprakṛṭi*. But he says that he himself is

Kṣheṭrajña in the sense in which every manifested Ego is but a reflection of the *Logos*, while he himself is the real form of the Ego, the only true self in the cosmos. He takes care, however, to point out in several places that though he is *kṣheṭrajña*, he is not subject to *karmabandham*; he does not create *karma*, simply because the self manifested in the *upāḍhi* is not his own true self, but merely a reflection, which has an individual phenomenal existence for the time being, but is ultimately dissolved in himself.

In verse 4 (see above) he refers to *Brahmasūṭras* for the details of the three *upāḍhis* in man, their relation to each other and the various powers manifested by this Ego. Hence it is in that book—the *Brahmasūṭras*—that we have to look for a detailed examination of this subject.

Turn now to verse 22 :

> The supreme *Puruṣha* in this body is called the Witness, the Director, the Supporter, the Enjoyer, the Great Lord and the Supreme Spirit *(Paramāṭmā)*.

It must not be imagined that the word *Paramāṭmā* here used refers to *Parabrahmam*. I have already said that it applies to Kṛshṇa himself. Though he is *Kṣheṭrajña*, he is not responsible for *karma*, and this he explains in verses 30 and 32 of the same chapter :

> He perceives the real truth who sees that *karma* is the result of *Prakṛṭi* and that the *Āṭmā* performs no *karma*.

> This imperishable and supreme *Āṭmā* does no *karma* and does not feel the effects of *karma* even while existing

in the body, as it is without beginning and without *Guṇam.*

Throughout chapter xiv, Kṛshṇa distinctly repudiates any responsibility for *karma*, or any of the effects produced by the three *Guṇams* which are the children of *Mūlaprakṛṭi.* Look at verse 19 for instance :

> When the (discriminating) observer recognises no other agent (of *karma*) than the qualities (of *Prakṛṭi*), and knows that which is beyond these qualities, he attains to my being.

And now turn to the closing verse in that chapter, a passage we have already referred to in another connection :

> I am the image of *Parabrahmam*, which is indestructible, unchangeable, and (I am) the abode of the eternal *ḍharma* (Law) and of absolute happiness.

Here he says he is the image of *Parabrahmam* which is eternal and has no *Vikāram*, and he is the abode wherein resides the eternal *ḍharma* of the cosmos, and he is also the abode of bliss, and it is for this reason that the *Logos* is often described as *Sachchiḍānanḍam.* It is *Saṭ*, because it is *Parabrahmam* ; and *Chiṭ*, because it contains within itself the eternal *ḍharma* of the cosmos, the whole law of cosmic evolution ; it is *Ānanḍam*, because it is the abode of bliss, and the highest happiness possible for man is attained when the human soul reaches the *Logos.*

Now turn to chapter xv, verse 7, a passage which has unfortunately given rise to many sectarian disputes :

> It is the *amsha* which emanates from me and which is manifested from the beginning of time that becomes the *Jīva* in the world of living beings, and attracts mind and the other five senses which have their basis in *Prakṛṭi*.

The proposition herein made is a matter of necessary inference almost inevitable from the premises I have laid down : if what constitutes the *Jīva* is the light of the *Logos*, which is *Chaiṭanyam*, and which, becoming differentiated, forms the individual Ego in combination with the *kāraṇopāḍhi*.

I need not now advert to all the controversies to which this passage has given rise. The verse is perhaps susceptible of more than one interpretation, and the different interpretations were necessitated by the different premises with which the interpreters started.

Read now verse 8 :

> When the lord, *Jīva* (human Ego), quits one body and enters another he carries with him the senses as the wind carries the fragrance of flowers from their source.

Here Kṛshṇa refers to that human individuality which resides in the *kāraṇa sharīra*. It is the human monad, or *kāraṇa sharīra*, that is the one connecting link between the various incarnations of man ; when it leaves the body for ḍevachan, it takes with it all the germs of conscious existence, the essence of the

five *Ṭanmāṭras,* the *Manas* and the *Ahankāram.* Strictly speaking, in every stage of conscious existence, there are seven elements which are always present, *viz.*, the five senses, the mind (also recognised as a sense by some of our philosophers), and the Ego. These are the seven elements that constantly manifest themselves whenever consciousness manifests itself, or conscious existence makes its appearance. They exist in the *sṭhūla sharīra,* further also in the *sūkṣhma sharīra,* and they are latent in *kāraṇa sharīra.* Not only are they latent in *kāraṇa sharīra,* but even the impulses generated in connection with the seven elements of conscious existence reside in it, and form that latent energy which tries to spend itself, as it were, by bringing about the future incarnations, the environments being those determined by the past *karma* of the man and the impulses already generated thereby.

In calling attention to verses 12—14 :

> Know that the splendour which belongs to the sun and illumines the whole world—which is in the moon and in fire—is from me.
>
> Entering into the earth, I sustain all things by my energy ; and I am the cause of the moisture that nourishes the herbs.
>
> Becoming fire (of digestion) I enter into the bodies of all that breathe, and being united with *Praṇām* and *Apānam,* I cause food of the four kinds to digest.

I have only to point out that what Kṛṣhṇa really means is, that it is his energy that gives to matter all

its properties, and that all the properties that we now associate with matter, and all those tendencies of chemical action that we see in the chemical elements, did not belong to it or them originally.

When you examine *Mūlaprakṛṭi*, none of these tendencies are found to be present in it. It is simply the stuff or substance which is endowed with these properties by the action on it of the current of life which emanates from the *Logos.* Consequently Kṛshṇa says that all the qualities exhibited in matter, as in fire, the sun, light, or any other object that you may take into consideration, originally emanate from him, because it was his life, his energy, that gives to matter all the qualities that enable it afterwards to form the various organisms that we now see in the manifested cosmos. In connection with this point you will find it interesting to refer to what is stated, I believe, in one of the ten Upanishaṭs (*Kenopanishaṭ*) with reference to the mysterious appearance of *Parāshakṭi* (*Ḍaivīprakṛṭi* in *Swarga*).

When *Parāshakṭi* first appeared, Indra wanted to know what it was. He first sent *Agni* to enquire what it was that appeared in that peculiar form. Then *Parāshakṭi* asked *Agni*, what functions he fulfilled or what were his latent capacities. *Agni* replied that he could reduce almost everything to ashes. And in order to show that this attribute did not originally belong to *Agni* but was simply lent to him, *Parāshakṭi* placed before him a little bit of grass

and asked him to reduce that to ashes. He tried his best, but failed. *Vāyu* was next sent; but he also failed in a similar manner. All this was done to show that *Parāshakṭi,* or the light of the *Logos* endows even the *Pañchaṭanmāṭras* with qualities that did not originally belong to *Mūlaprakṛṭi.* Kṛshṇa is right in saying that he constitutes the real energy of the fire and of all those things he has enumerated.

Now turn to verse 16 of the same chapter, which has also given rise to a considerable number of interpretations:

> These two *Purushas*—the perishable and the imperishable—exist in the world. The perishable is all the living beings, and the imperishable—is called the *Kūtasṭha.*

The meaning here is clear enough if you will only read it in the light of the explanations already given. Kṛshṇa first divides all existing entities into two classes, those not permanent—*Ksharam*—by which he means the manifested cosmos, and *Aksharam,* or imperishable, which he calls *Kūtasṭham,* the undifferentiated *Prakṛṭi.* He also uses the same word, in another passage, in connection with the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas; and it is but natural to conclude that he here uses the same word in the same sense.

In the succeeding verse he says that these two classes are inferior to himself. Although *Aksharam* is not destroyed at the time of cosmic *Pralaya,* as are all the things that come out of it, yet his own

nature is superior to that of this *Aksharam*, and that is why he is called *Uttama Purusha.* For we read in verse 17 :

> But there is another, the supreme *Uttama Purusha,* called (*Paramāṭmā*) (the supreme Āṭmā) who is the imperishable Lord, and who pervades and sustains the three worlds.

I have only to refer you, in this connection, to verse 66 of chapter xviii :

> Renouncing all religious observances, come to me as the only refuge. I will deliver thee from all sins ; grieve not.

To crown all, here is a distinct declaration that he is the one means and the most effectual means of obtaining salvation. These are all the passages to which I wish to call your attention, in reference to the *Logos.* The passages read go far, I believe, to support every one of the propositions I have laid down in connection with it, as regards its own inherent nature and its relation to the cosmos and to man.

Now, as regards *Mūlaprakṛṭi,* I have already called attention to it in several places when speaking of *Parabrahmam* and of the *Logos.* There is one passage, however, which I did not cite. I believe I have clearly indicated the distinction between this *Avyakṭam* or *Mūlaprakṛṭi* and the *Logos,* as well as that between *Mūlaprakṛṭi* and *Ḍaivīprakṛṭi.*

I have also said that *Mūlaprakṛṭi* should not be confounded with *Parabrahmam*. If it is anything at all, it is but a veil of *Parabrahmam*. In order to support my statements I now ask you to turn to chapter viii, verse 20:

> But there is another *Avyakṭam* superior to the *Avyakṭam* above mentioned, which is without a beginning and which survives when all the *bhūṭams* perish.

The preceding verses should also be read:

> At the approach of day all manifestations issue from *Avyakṭam*: at the approach of night, they are absorbed into *Avyakṭam*.
>
> All these collective beings, produced again and again, are dissolved at the approach of night, O Pārṭha (Arjuna), and are evolved involuntarily at the approach of day.

Here Kṛṣhṇa says that at the time when the cosmos wakes into a condition of activity, all the *bhūṭams* spring from this *avyakṭam*; when the time of *pralaya* comes, they go back into *avyakṭam*. But lest this *avyakṭam* should be mistaken for *Parabrahmam*, he takes care to point out that there is an entity which is higher than this, which is also called *avyakṭam*, but which is different from the *avyakṭam* of the Sāṅkhyas and even existing anterior to it. It is *Parabrahmam* in fact.

It is not an evolved entity, and it will not perish even at the time of cosmic *pralaya*, because it is the

one basis, not only of the whole cosmos, but even of this *Mūlaprakṛti,* which seems to be the foundation of the cosmos.

As regards *Daivīprakṛti,* I have already called your attention to those passages in chapter vii, which refer to it.

Thus the four main principles I have enumerated, and which I described as constituting the four principles of the infinite cosmos, are described and explained, precisely in the manner I have myself adopted, in the teachings of this book.

Kṛshṇa does not go into the details of the four principles that exist in the manifested solar system, because, so far as the ultimate object of his teaching is concerned, it is not absolutely necessary for him to go into the details of that question; and as regards the relation of the microcosmic *upāḍhis* to the soul and their connection with each other, instead of giving all the details of the philosophy connected with them, he refers to the *Brahmasūṭras,* in which the question is fully discussed.

The so-called *Prasṭhānaṭrayam,* upon the authority of which our ancient philosophers relied, composed of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā,* the ten *Upanishaṭs* and *Brahmasūṭras,* must be thoroughly examined to find complete explanation of the whole theory.

The main object of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā* which is one of the main sources of Hinḍū philosophy—is to explain the higher principles that operate in the

cosmos, which are omnipresent and permanent and which are common to all the solar systems.

The main object of the *Upanishaṭs* is to indicate the nature of this manifested cosmos, and the principles and energies therein present.

Lastly, in the *Brahmasūṭras* an attempt is made to give a clear and consistent theory about the composition of the entity that we call a human being, the connection of the soul with the three *upāḍhis*, their nature and their connection with the soul on the one hand, and between themselves on the other. These books are not, however, devoted to these subjects only, but each book deals prominently with one of these subjects, and it is only when you take all the three into consideration, that you will have a consistent theory of the whole Veḍânṭic philosophy.

And now, granting the truth of the premises we have laid down, what are the conclusions that will necessarily follow?

For this purpose the whole of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā* may be divided into three parts. Of the first six chapters, the first is merely introductory, the remaining chapters deal with the five theories that have been suggested by various philosophers as pointing out to man the way to salvation; the succeeding six chapters explain the theory which Kṛshṇa advocates as pointing out the way which he recommends as the best one to follow, and give such explanations as are necessary. In the last six chapters, Kṛshṇa attempts

by various arguments to point out that it is *Prakṛṭi* which is mainly responsible for *Karma*, for even the various intellectual and moral qualities that are exhibited by human beings, for the varieties of the emotional nature, and for the various practices that are followed. It is impossible for me now to go into the whole of this argument in detail. In studying this book the last six chapters should be read first, because one of the main principles that will have to be taken into account in dealing with all the various measures that have been recommended, is therein enumerated and established; and our conclusions will have to be altered if the doctrine those six chapters are intended to inculcate is found to be false or untenable. Of course, in those six chapters, the illustrations are taken, not from matters with which we at the present day are familiar, but from matters which, at the time Kṛṣhṇa gave this discourse, were perfectly intelligible to his hearers, and to the public of that day, and with which they were thoroughly familiar. So it is possible that in the illustrations he gives we may not be able to find those arguments and those considerations, which, perhaps, a modern writer, trying to support the same conclusions, would present to the mind of the reader. Notwithstanding this, the nature of the argument is the same, and the conclusion is true for all time to come. Illustrations will certainly be forthcoming, if necessary, from other departments of human knowledge with which

we at the present day are familiar. It does not require any very lengthy argument to show, now that the works of Professor Bain and Herbert Spencer have been so widely read, that the human physical organism has a great deal to do with the mental structure of man; and, in fact, all modern psychology is trying to find a foundation for itself in physiology and is perhaps even going to extremes in this direction. The great French philosopher who originated what is called Positivism, would not, in his classification of sciences, assign a separate place to psychology. He wanted to give psychology a subordinate place, and include it, as a branch subject, under physiology.

This classification shows the extremes to which this tendency may lead. If all that is found in the body is nothing more than the material of which it is composed, true psychology is nothing more than physiology, and the mind is but an affection of matter. But there is something more than the mere physical organism; there is this invisible essence that we call the supreme *Chaiṭanyam* which constitutes the individuality of man, and which is, further, that energy which manifests itself as the consciousness behind the individuality.

It is not material, and it is not likely that science will be able to get a glimpse of its real nature till it begins to adopt the methods of all the great occultists who have attempted to probe into this mystery. But at any rate this much must be conceded; whatever

the real nature of this essence or life-force may be, the human constitution or the physical body has a good deal to do with the mental development and character of a human being.

Of course the force that operates in all these *upāḍhis* is, as it were, colourless—it can by itself produce no result. But when acting in conjunction with *Prakṛṭi*, it is the force that is the substratum of all the kingdoms, and almost every thing in the cosmos is, in a certain sense, traceable to this force. When, however, you begin to deal with particular forms of conscious existence, particular characteristics and developments, you will have to trace them, strictly speaking, to the *upāḍhis*, or the material forms in which the force is acting, and not to the force itself. So Kṛshṇa says all *karma* is traceable to *upāḍhi*, and hence to *Prakṛṭi*. *Karma* itself depends upon conscious existence. Conscious existence entirely depends upon the constitution of the man's mind, and this depends upon the nervous system of the body and the various elements existing therein, the nature of the astral elements and the energies stored up in the *Kāraṇopāḍhi*.

In the case of even the astral body the same law holds good. To begin with, there is the aura, which is material in the strict sense of the word, and which composes its *upāḍhi*. Behind this there is the energy, which is the basis of that feeling of self that even an astral man experiences.

Going on still higher, to *kāraṇa sharīra,* there again you find this invisible, colourless force acting within its *upāḍhi,* which contains within itself the characteristics of the individual Ego.

Go where you will, you will find that *karma* and the *guṇams* emanate from *Prakṛṭi*: *upāḍhi* is the cause of *individual* existence.

Existence itself, I mean living existence, is however traceable to this light. All conscious existence, is traceable to it, and furthermore, when spiritual intelligence is developed, it directly springs from it.

Now let us assume that this is the conclusion we are prepared to admit—and I need not enter into the details of the argument, which you will find at length in the last six chapters. Let us now examine in order the various theories suggested by different philosophers. I shall take them as they are dealt with in the first six chapters of this book.

The first chapter is merely introductory. The second treats of Sāṅkhya Yoga, the third of Karma Yoga, the fourth of Jñāna Yoga, the fifth of Karmasamnyāsa Yoga, and the sixth deals with Aṭmasamyama Yoga.

These are the theories suggested by other philosophers, and in this list Kṛṣhṇa does not include that path of salvation pointed out by himself, which is set forth in the second group of six chapters. I believe that almost all the various suggestions made

by different philosophers can be brought under one or the other of these headings. To complete the list, there is the method suggested by Kṛshṇa himself as being of universal applicability and, standing in the background, unknown and unseen, is that occult method, to facilitate which all the systems of initiation have been brought into existence. As this occult method is not of universal applicability, Kṛshṇa leaves it in the background and puts his doctrine in such a manner as to render it applicable to the whole of mankind. He points out the defects of each of the other systems, and takes, as it were, the best part of the five theories, and adds the one element, without which every one of these theories will become false. He thus constructs the theory which he recommends for the acceptance of mankind.

Take, for instance, the Sāṅkhya philosophy. I have already explained the peculiar doctrine of the Sāṅkhyan philosophers, that their *avyakṭam* itself was the one self manifested everywhere in all *upāḍhis*. That is more or less their *Purusha*. This *Purusha* is entirely passive. It is not the *Īshvara*, not the active, creative God, but simply a sort of passive substratum of the cosmos, and all that is done in the cosmos is done by *Prakṛṭi*, which produces all the organisms or *upāḍhis* that constitute the sum total of the cosmos. They accept the view that *karma* and all the results that spring therefrom are traceable to this *Māyā* or *Prakṛṭi*, to this substratum

that forms the basis of all manifestation. Now it is through the action of this *karma* that individual existence makes its appearance. On account of this *karma* individual existence is maintained, and it is on account of *karma* that man suffers all the pains and sorrows of earthly existence. Birth, life and death, and all the innumerable ills to which human nature is subject, are endured by mankind owing to this *karma*. Granting their premises, if the ambition of your life is to put an end to all earthly sorrows, then your object should be to put an end to the operation of this *karma*.

But the question is, how can you do this? While *Parabrahmam* remains passive, *Prakṛti* goes on creating the cosmos without its interference. It is not possible to get rid of *Prakṛti* or its *guṇams* altogether. You may as well try to rid fire or water of all its properties. Thus, *karma* being the inevitable result of *Prakṛti*, and *Prakṛti* continuing to exist as long as you are a human being, it is useless to try to get rid of *karma*. But, they say, you must try to get rid of the effects of *karma* by reducing yourself to the passive state of existence in which *Parabrahmam* is, remaining simply a disinterested witness. Do *karma*, not with a desire to do it, but from a sense of duty—because it must be done. The Sāṅkhyas say: give up *saṅgam*, that *desire* to do *karma*, which alone seems to connect the soul with it, and renounce this connection,

which alone renders the soul responsible for the *karma*.

What will happen then? They say, when you renounce this desire, *karma* will become weaker and weaker in its ability to affect you, till at last you arrive at a condition in which you are not affected by *karma* at all, and that condition is the condition of *mukṭi*. You will then become what you were originally. You yourself are but a delusive manifestation of *avyakṭam*, and when once this delusive appearance ceases to exist, you become *Parabrahmam*.

This is the theory suggested by the Sāṅkhyas. Furthermore, as this *avyakṭam*, which exists everywhere—which is eternal, and cannot be affected by anything else—forms the real soul of man, to hold it responsible for any *karma*, is shown in the chapter before us to be but a figment of Arjuna's fancy. Self cannot kill self. All that is done by the real self is in reality what is done by the various forms of *Prakṛṭi*. The one substratum is immutable and can never be affected by any action of *Prakṛṭi*. For some inexplicable reason or other the one self seems to have descended from the condition of passive existence, and to have assumed a delusive active individual existence in your own self. Try to get rid of this delusive appearance, then the result will be that you attain Nirvāṇa.

Kṛṣhṇa examines this theory. He admits two of the premises. He says that all this *karma* is due to

upāḍhi, and leads to conditioned existence, subject to all the pains and sorrows of life. But he denies that the supreme end of man's life is to reach this *avyakṭam*, and he further states that it is far more difficult to reach this *avyakṭam* than to reach himself; and that even if those who direct all their efforts towards the attainment of this *avyakṭam* meet with any success at all, it can only be by joining him, for otherwise it is impossible to reach *avyakṭam*. While accepting two of the conclusions of the Sāṅkhyas, he points out that the real goal is not the one they postulated.

Now let us turn to the second system. This is mainly that kind of philosophy which is inculcated by the followers of *Pūrva Mīmāmsa*. Every form of ritualism has its basis in the philosophy of *Karmakāṇda*. The arguments here used by Kṛṣhṇa in support of his own conclusions will not be quite intelligible to our minds for the simple reason that times have changed during the last five thousand years. At the time this discourse was delivered, the Veḍānṭic ritual was strictly followed, and the conclusions of the followers of *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* were very well known and were a common topic of discussion. This philosophy was intended to provide a solution for all the difficulties that were common to the other systems of philosophy at that time evolved. But some of the arguments put forward by the Karma Yogīs may be extended beyond the very

limited form in which they are to be found stated in the books, and can be made applicable even to the life of modern times.

Karma Yogīs say: True, this *karma* may be due to *upāḍhi* but it is not due to *upāḍhi* alone; it is due to the effects produced by the two elements *upāḍhi* and *chaiṭanyam.* Those philosophers who want to reject all *karma* pretend to renounce it altogether. But that is an impossible task. No man, as long as he is a human being, can ever give up *karma* altogether. He is at least bound to do that which the bare existence of his physical body requires, unless indeed he means to die of starvation, or otherwise put an untimely end to his life.

Supposing you do give up *karma*—that is, abstain from it in *action,* how can you keep control over your own minds? It is useless to abstain from an act and yet be constantly thinking of it. If you come to the resolution that you ought to give up *karma,* you must necessarily conclude that you ought not even to think about these things. That being so, let us see in what a condition you will then place yourselves. As almost all our mental states have some connection with the phenomenal world, and are somehow or other connected with *karma* in its various phases, it is difficult to understand how it is possible for a man to give up all *karma,* unless he can annihilate his mind, or get into an eternal state of *sushupṭi.* Moreover, if you have to give up all *karma,* you have to give up good

karma as well as bad, for *karma*, in its widest sense, is not confined solely to bad actions. If all the people in the world give up *karma*, how is the world to exist? Is it not likely that an end will then be put to all good impulses, to all patriotic and philanthropic deeds that all the good people, who have been and are exerting themselves in doing unselfish deeds for the good of their fellow-men, will be prevented from working? If you call upon everybody to give up *karma*, you will simply create a number of lazy drones and prevent good people from benefiting their fellow beings.

And, furthermore, it may be argued that this is not a rule of universal applicability. How few are there in the world who can give up their whole *karma* and reduce themselves to a position of eternal inactivity! And if you ask these people to follow this course, they may, instead of giving up *karma*, simply become lazy, idle persons, who have not really given up anything. What is the meaning of the expression "to give up *karma*?" Kṛshṇa says that in abstaining from doing a thing there may be the effects of active *karma* and in active *karma* there may be no real kārmic results. If you kill a man, it is murder, and you are held responsible for it; but suppose you refuse to feed your old parents and they die in consequence of your neglect, do you mean to say that you are not responsible for that *karma*? You may talk in the most metaphysical manner you please, you

cannot get rid of *karma* altogether. These are the arguments put forward by an advocate of this second view.

The unfortunate mistake that these Karma Yogīs make is this: in their system there is little or nothing said about the *Logos*. They accept all the thirty-three crores of gods mentioned in the Veḍas and say that the Veḍas represent the *Logos* or *Verbum*. They say: "the Veḍas have prescribed a certain course to be followed, and it is not for you to say whether such a course is or is not capable of producing the result to be attained. You ought to take what is stated in the Veḍas as absolute truth, and by performing the various rituals therein prescribed, you will be able to reach *swargam*. Ḍevas will assist your efforts, and in the end you will attain supreme happiness. That being the course prescribed, we are not called upon to give up all *karma*, and thereby throw all existing institutions into a state of inextricable confusion."

To these Karmavāḍīs Kṛṣhṇa says: "One of your conclusions I accept, the other I deny. I admit that an incalculable number of evil consequences will follow as the result of telling people to give up *karma*, but I cannot admit that your worship of the ḍevas is at all a desirable thing."

Who and what are these ḍevas? "They are beings on the plane of *kāraṇa sharīra*. They can never give you immortality, because they are not immortal

themselves. Even if through worshipping them you are enabled to reach *swargam*, you will have to return thence into objective existence in a new incarnation. The happiness that *swargam* can give you is not eternal and permanent, but subject to this disturbance. And what is more, if you worship the ḍevas, concentrating your mind on them and making them the sole object of your attention, it is their *bhāvam* that you will obtain, and not mine." Taking all these circumstances into consideration, and admitting the many mischievous consequences that in their view will follow as the result of recommending every human being to give up *karma*, Kṛshṇa adds to this system all that is to be found in the teaching that makes the *Logos* the means of salvation, and recommends man, if he would seek to obtain immortality, a method by following which he is sure to reach it, and not one that may end in his having to go through another incarnation, or being absorbed into another spiritual being whose existence is not immortal. Furthermore, all these thirty-three crores of gods spring into existence with the beginning of every *manvanṭara* and disappear at *pralaya*. Thus, when the very existence of the ḍevas themselves is not permanent, you cannot expect that your existence will become permanent by merging it into their plane of being.

I now turn to the third theory—*Karma-samnyāsa-Yoga*. This Kṛshṇa at once rejects as being a most

mischievous and even impossible course to follow. All the advantages offered by its pursuit may be obtained by doing *karma*, not as a matter of human affection, passion or desire,but as a matter of duty.

The fourth system is that of *Jñāna Yoga*. When people began to perceive that it was altogether unmeaning, unless accompanied by proper knowledge, they said it was not the *karma* suggested by the followers of *Pūrva-Mīmāmsa*, or the followers of any other particular ritual, that would be of any use for man's salvation; but the knowledge of, or the intellectual elements underlying the ritual, that would be far more important than any physical act could be.

As Kṛshṇa says, their motto is, that all *karma* is intended simply as a step to gain knowledge or *jñāna*. These philosophers, while admitting that *karma* should not be rejected, have perscribed other methods of their own, by means of which they thought salvation would be gained.

They said: "Consider *karma* to be a kind of discipline, and try to understand what this *karma* really means. It is in fact merely symbolical. There is a deep meaning underlying the whole ritual that deals with real entities, with the secrets of nature, and all the faculties imbedded in man's *Pragña*, and its meaning must not be taken to apply to physical acts alone, for they are nothing more than what their outward appearances signify." In addition to mere *karma-yoga*, they adopted several other

kinds of *yoga*, such as *japa*. Strictly speaking, this *karma-yoga* is not *yoga* at all, properly so called. They have added to it *antar-yoga*, *praṇāgnihotra*, and other things which may be more or less considered as refined substitutes for external ritual. Now as regards the theory of these philosophers. All that Kṛshṇa has to propose is that their *jñāna* should be directed towards its proper source. They must have some definite aim before them in their search after truth, and they must not simply follow either *japa* or *ṭapas*, or any other method which is supposed to open the interior senses of man, without having also a complete view of the whole path to be traversed and the ultimate goal to be reached. Because, if the attainment of knowledge is all that you require, it may be you still stop short at a very great distance from the *Logos* and the spiritual knowledge that it can give you. Strictly speaking, all scientists and all those who are enquiring into the secrets of nature, are also following the recommendations of this *jñāna-yoga*. But is that kind of investigation and knowledge sufficient for the purpose of enabling a man to attain immortality? It is not by itself sufficient to produce this effect. This course may indeed ultimately bring to the notice of man all those great truths belonging to the principles operating in the cosmos, which alone, when properly appreciated and followed, will be able to secure to man the highest happiness he can desire—that is, immortality

or *mokṣha*. While admitting the advantages of the spirit of enquiry recommended by this school, Kṛṣhṇa tries to direct it towards the accomplishment of this object.

Let us now examine the fifth system. The votaries of this sect, after having examined what was said by the Sāṅkhyas as well as all the teachings of the other systems we have described, came to the conclusion that it would only be possible to give up *karma* in truth and not merely in name, if you could somehow or other restrain the action of the mind. As long as you cannot concentrate the mind upon yourself, or turn self towards self, it is not possible for you to restrain your nature, and so long as you cannot do that, it is almost impossible to subdue *Prakṛti* or rise superior to the effects of *karma*.

These philosophers wanted men to act in accordance with certain recommendations they laid down as a more effectual and positive means of obtaining mastery over one's own mind, without which mastery they considered it impossible to carry out the programme of either the Sāṅkhya or the *Jñāna-yoga* schools. It was for this purpose that all the various systems of *Hatha-yoga* with their different processes, by means of which man attempted to control the action of his own mind, were brought into existence. It was these people who recommended what might be called *Abhyāsa-yoga*. Whatever may be the

definite path pointed out, whether *Hatha-yoga*, or that department of *Rāja-yoga* that does not necessarily refer to secret initiations, the object is the same, and the final purpose is the attainment of perfect control over oneself.

This recommendation to practise and obtain self-mastery Kṛshṇa accepts. But he would add to it more effectual means of obtaining the desired end—means sufficient in themselves to enable you to reach that end. He points out that this *Abhyāsa-yoga* is not only useful for training in one birth, but is likely to leave permanent impulses on a man's soul which come to his rescue in future incarnations. As regards the real difficulties that are encountered in following this system, I need not speak at present, because all of you are aware of the difficulties generally encountered by *Hatha-yogīs*. Many of our own members have made some efforts in this direction, and they will know from personal experience what difficulties are in the way.

Kṛshṇa, in recommending his own method, combines all that is good in the five systems, and adds thereto all those necessary means of obtaining salvation that follow as inferences from the existence of the *Logos*, and Its real relationship to man and to all the principles that operate in the cosmos. His method is certainly more comprehensive than any of the theories from which these various schools of philosophy have started, and it is this theory that

he is trying to inculcate in the succeeding six chapters.

As I have already referred to various passages in these six chapters to show in what light you ought to regard the *Logos,* I need not say anything more now, and if you will bear in mind the remarks I have already made, the meaning will not be very difficult to reach.

In this connection there is one point on which I have been asked to give some explanation.

Reference is made in this book to *uṭṭarāyaṇam* and *ḍakṣhiṇāyaṇam,* or day and night, or light and darkness. These are symbolical of the two paths *pravṛṭṭimārga* and *nivṛṭṭimārga.* What he calls *uṭṭarāyaṇam* is *nivṛṭṭimārga,* represented as day or the path of light, the path he recommends, and the other, *ḍakṣhiṇāyaṇam,* is *pravṛṭṭimārga,* or the way which leads to embodied existence in this world.

But there is one expression in the book that is significant. Kṛṣhṇa says that those who follow this second path attain to *Chānḍrāmasamjyoṭih* and return thence, while those who follow the first method reach *Brahman.* This *Chānḍramasamjyoṭih* is in reality a symbol of ḍevachanic existence. The moon shines, not by its own light, but by the light derived from the sun. Similarly the *kāraṇa sharīra* shines by the light emanating from the *Logos,* which is the only real source of light, and not by its own inherent light. That which goes to *ḍevachan* or *swarga*

is this *kāraṇa sharīra,* and this it is that returns from *ḍevachan.* Kṛshṇa tries to indicate the nature of the *Logos* by comparing it to the sun or something that the sun symbolises.

I may here draw your attention to one other contingency that may happen to man after death, in addition to those I have already enumerated. Those who have read Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buḍḍhism,* will, perhaps, recollect that he talks of the terrible fate that might befall the soul in what he calls the eighth sphere. This has given rise to a considerable amount of misunderstanding. The real state of things is that the *kāraṇa sharīra* may, in very extreme circumstances, die, as the physical body or the astral body dies. Suppose that, in course of time, the *kāraṇa sharīra* is reduced, by the persistence of bad *karma,* into a condition of physical existence, which renders it impossible for it to reflect the light of the *Logos*; or suppose that that on which it feeds, as it were—the good *karma* of the man—loses all its energy, and that no tendencies of action are communicated to it, then the result may be that the *kāraṇa sharīra* dies, or becomes merely a useless aggregation of particles, instead of being a living organism, just as the physical body decomposes and becomes a dead body when the life principle leaves it.

The *kāraṇa sharīra* may become so contaminated and so unfit to reflect the light of the *Logos* as to render any future individual existence impossible;

and then the result is annihilation, which is simply the most terrible fate that can befall a human being. Without proceeding further, I must stop here.

I beg that you will all kindly bear this in mind. We have merely commenced the study of *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā* in these lectures. Try to examine, by the light of the statements found in our own books, and in modern books on psychology and science, whether the theory I have placed before you is at all tenable or not—decide for yourselves —whether that is the theory supported by the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭa* itself. Do not rely on a host of commentaries, which will only confuse you, but try to interpret the text for yourselves as far as your intelligence will allow, and if you think this is really a correct theory, try to follow it up and think out the whole philosophy for yourselves. I have found that a good deal more is to be gained by concentration of thought and meditation, than by reading any number of books or hearing any number of lectures. Lectures are utterly useless, unless you think out for yourselves what they treat of. The Society cannot provide you with philosophical food already digested, as though you were in the ideal state of passivity aimed at by the advocates of the Sāṅkhyan philosophy; but every one of you is expected to read and study the subject for himself. Read and gain knowledge, and then use what you have gained for the benefit of your own countrymen.

The philosophy contained in our old books is valuable, but it has been turned into superstition. We have lost almost all our knowledge. What we call religion is but the shell of a religion that once existed as a living faith. The sublime philosophy of Shaṅkarāchārya has assumed quite a hideous form at the present day.

The philosophy of a good many Aḍwaiṭis does not lead to practical conduct. They have examined all their books, and they think with the Southern Buḍḍhists of Ceylon, that *Nirvāṇa* is the *Nirvāṇa* promised by the Sāṅkhyan philosophers, and instead of following out their own philosophy to its legitimate conclusion, they have introduced by their *Pañchayaṭanapūja* and other observances what seems to be a foolish and unnecessary compromise between the different views of the various sects that have existed in India. Visishṭāḍwaiṭa philosophy has degenerated, and is now little more than temple worship, and has not produced any good impression on men's minds. Maḍhwa philosophy has degenerated in the same manner, and has perhaps become more fanatical. For instance, Shaṅkarāchārya is represented in their Maṇimañjari as a Rākshasa of former times. In Northern India people generally recite *Sapṭashaṭi* and many have adopted *Shakṭi* worship. Kāli is worshipped in Calcutta more perhaps than any other deity. If you examine these customs by the light of Kṛshṇa's teachings, it must appear to you that, instead

of having Hinḍūism, we have assimilated a whole collection of superstitious beliefs and practices which do not by any means tend to promote the welfare of the Hinḍū nation, but demoralise it and sap its spiritual strength, and have led to the present state of things, which, I believe, is not entirely due to political degeneration.

Our Society stands upon an altogether unsectarian basis; we sympathise with every religion, but not with every abuse that exists under the guise of religion; and while sympathising with every religion, and making the best efforts we can for the purpose of recovering the common foundations that underlie all religious beliefs, it ought to be the duty of every one of us to try to enlighten our own countrymen on the philosophy of religion, endeavour to lead them back to a purer faith—a faith which, no doubt, did exist in former times, but which now lives but in name or in the pages of forgotten books.

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